Robert Ker Porter, Journal of a Tour in North Wales

1799

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Journal of a Tour in North Wales

On 11 July 1799, the 22-year-old Scottish painter (later traveller and diplomat) Robert Ker Porter (1777-1842) arrived in Shrewsbury, ahead of a walking and sketching tour of north Wales. Porter had for company his friend and fellow artist Thomas Underwood (1772-1835), on a month-long and roughly circular tour that took them across mid-Wales to the western coastline (including Dolgellau and Barmouth), then up to Snowdonia, and back through the Vale of Clwyd to Chester and the Peak District.

Born in Durham, Porter grew up in Edinburgh, where he showed huge promise as a painter. He moved to London in 1791 in order to attend school at the Royal Academy, and the world of art went on to define the rest of this decade for him. It was almost certainly the motivation behind his visit to Wales in 1799. Porter frequently mentions drawing and sketching outdoors on this tour, and notes that he and Underwood met up with other artists, including Louis Francia and one of the Varley brothers (probably John Varley), during their travels (see ff. 55, 89). These men had become part of a network of brilliant young artists in 1790s London that included JMW Turner and Thomas Girtin. Porter's closer, more immediate group of artist friends was known as 'the Brothers'; formed in May 1799, this group included Underwood and Francia and met (as Francia noted on the back of one of his sketches) in order to draw scenes of 'Historical landscape, the subjects being original designs from poetick passages'. An example of this kind of work by Porter survives (fig. 1), in a picture that appears as though it could be inspired as much by Welsh settings as by literary prompts. By July 1799, Porter, Underwood, Francia and others were in Wales in order to sketch not from poetry but from real life.



Fig. 1. Robert Ker Porter, 'An Ancient Castle' (c.1799-1800), watercolour and graphite on paper, 209 x 296 mm (CC-BY-NC-ND 3.0) https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/porter-an-ancient-castle-t08532

While art might have taken him to Wales, Porter's tour is also a highly readable account of several weeks on the road, characterised by a lively narrative voice, and sharply observed local detail. At times he finds fault with his surroundings, or loses patience with the unsettled weather, or with his companion, in passages that emphasise the social and material aspects of travel in what Porter called his '6 week Zig Zag of Human Incidents' (f. 127). Much of his journey was made by foot; taking a chaise from Northwich to Macclesfield, Porter reflected that he and Underwood were now travelling 'more like Gentleman tourists than dirty Artists' (f. 105).

Porter's visual and painterly approach to place comes to the fore particularly in sections on the sublimity of Cader Idris and Snowdonia, where he described scenes that 'untill [sic] this moment [he] had never beheld', and which 'human talents' were 'far beneath the power of conveying' (f. 33). He writes energetically about and with close attention to the dramatic landscapes he encountered on the tour: Pont Aberglaslyn appeared 'by far the most barbaric or apparently uncivilized Morsel of Wales I had yet beheld'. He noted it as a kind of 'Hell on Earth', 'deep as the Devil's dwelling' – before stopping to draw it. Several pages later, Aberglaslyn's stony perpendicular gives way to 'dark thick mist' (f. 61) on the summit of Snowdon, the view 'undistinct', 'dreamy' or 'glazed' with 'a sort of supernatural film … so ingeniously stirred up with the clouds that, by degrees, earth and air became the same: and seemed as tho' these two elements were going to exchange places' (ff. 61-5).

The sketches he made on this tour are not known to have survived, except for four small drawings – all of people – contained within the manuscript notebook. However, several watercolours by Thomas Underwood, now held at the Tate, including two paintings of Caernarfon (figs 1 and 2) and several unnamed coastal and mountain scenes, may well date from the 1799 tour.



Fig. 2. Thomas Richard Underwood, 'Carnarvon Castle' (n.d.), watercolour on paper, 127 x 188 mm
Tate (CC-BY-NC-ND 3.0) http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/underwood-carnarvon-castle-t09273

In 1799, Porter was on the verge of high profile success in his art work; he would shortly go on to produce the vast panorama *The Storming of Seringapatam,* which caused a sensation on being exhibited at the Lyceum Theatre in London in 1800. Work such as this and other military panoramas led directly to his appointment around 1805 as Historical Painter to the Russian Tsar, Alexander I – a precursor to diplomatic roles in Russia, the Middle East and later Venezuela. Without claiming too much for Porter's Welsh tour, and the experience of sketching outdoors in landscapes that he found spectacular, it undoubtedly took place at a crucial moment in his career as an artist.

Note on the source text:

The manuscript source consists of a small notebook written on recto pages only. The pagination in this edition follows that of the source text, which has been added by a later hand.



Fig. 3. Thomas Richard Underwood, 'Carnarvon Castle and Estuary' (n.d.), watercolour and graphite on paper, 198 x 300 mm, Tate (CC-BY-NC-ND 3.0) http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/underwood-carnarvon-castle-and-estuary-t09267

Further reading:

- Ann Bermingham, 'Girtin's Sketching Club (act. 1799–1800)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press
- Anne Lyles and Robin Hamlyn, *British Watercolours from the Oppé Collection* (Tate Gallery, 1997)
- Thomas Seccombe, revised by Raymond Lister, 'Porter, Sir Robert Ker [*pseud.* Reynold Steinkirk] (1777–1842)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press
- David Winter, 'Girtin's Sketching Club', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 37: 2 (February 1974), pp. 123-49
- Christopher Wright, 'Painting Persepholis', *Picturing Places*, British Library online resource (2017), https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/painting-persepolis

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Shrewsbury

July 11th 1799.

Arrived here after a most stupid and tedious Journey in the long B[illegible]ted Coach; no passengers within entertaining or useful, nor even ornamental, accept Tommy Underwood and Myself. the remainder being made up of Old women, Parrots, Children, sick men, and Bundles – the first day hot and dusty, the second, raining damp and nasty. Tomorrow god willing we commence our perambulations. ----------

July the 12.

Left Shrewsbury at 10 oclock and commenced our walk, in the course of a Short time the first appearance of the Welsh Mountains Burst upon our View, the sight to me was uncommonly interesting and Grand; Interesting from ~~from~~many circumstances

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as it reminded me of the Many many happy days ^which I had passed in a similar country as to appearance. the cultivation which surrounded us on every side almost to the summit of the hills is rich and Luxuriant the people seem commodious ^and happy in their cottages, and what the divil else would they have? after passing the Salopian plains we approached the mountain ornamented by Lord Rodneys Pillar [1] which after the perambulation of a few miles, my friend Underwood and I sketched, ~~it~~ in not one of its most disagreeable points of view. No adventures, mental personal or occular of any singular moment attracted us during this day, and we arrived in Welshpool, fagged, footsore and fatigued about half past 5 –

Welshpool

after tea we visited the Castle and Park of Lord Powis , which both in itself and its surrounding objects raises the senses of observance to the highest pitch of gratification. looking towards Shrewsbury the view is most interestingly delightful being formed of a grand collection of stupendious and rich purple toned Mountains, decorated at their feet by well cultivated Lands, winding streams, whose waves do somewhat undulate here and there, but in colour seem rather snuffy. after having made one slight sketch in Powis park a sort of Poetic Furor betook my imagination, and I composed in the space of a few seconds the following four Lines

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and I dare say if it had not been for the damp of the forthcoming evening, I should have completed a whole Sonnet. “however that is as here after may be.” Minor.

If ever mortal was by ’servance sweet,
Of Nature’s beauties, roused to admire:
Set him soft muse at Powis Castle feet
And soon his soul will warm ^with Rosa's fire.[2]

I was too hungry to proceed, my feet were asleep and the Evening dew had nearly soked to the Skin, so I pocketed my Book trudged to the Royal Oak eat a good supper and thank god am going in good health to bed where by this time Tommy is fast asleep, so ^no more [illegible] Bon soir.

July the 13th.

Left Welsh Pool about nine o clock, the country for several miles was somewhat

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similar to that we had past the preceeding day. only more grand and stupendious, and the mountains ^were not cultivated so near their summits. After passing Llanfair (the first Welsh Village I had seen, which is most pleasantly situated on the Banks of the Venew)[3] we were met by a most tremendous storm of rain, and had it not been for the useful interferance of our Umbrella we certainly should have been compleatly drench’d in Welsh rain. about 1 we arrived at Cann Office a single house on the side of the road where we dined neat, clean, gratifying and comodious.

Llangadfan

July 14th, being Sunday.

The fatigue of the preceeding day had so overpowered my observing and comfortable sensations, that I thought Cann Office a Parradice. the place when I was Myself again, was damp dirty and odious. the People to be sure were civil, but slow and silent. here we remained all night, and after waiting from 7 till nine breakfasted and bent our course for Mallwyd. The commencement of this day’s Journey (for a few miles) was synonimous to the former, but we soon reached a more rugged and grand Country, which came nearer to my Idea dearly entertained of Wales. the Cottages are all built of loose stones and ^slated ~~tiled~~, time has enriched this covering with a deep toned greenish Brown Moss, that adds greatly to their beauty and rusticity. here and there the sides

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of the Mountains are happily bespringled by these romantic efforts of Welsh Architecture. We met several friends on Horse back riding in the English stile,[4] covered with Large blue cloaks round Black Hats, and from their centre downwards with blue striped raiment, their lower extremities now and then with Black stockings shoes and Buckles. the only figure of feminine appearance, which in the least deviated from what I have already described, was an Ederly woman who I dare say meant no external immodesty, bestrode her horse as would a Man, and consequently from the nature of her attire, could not in such a situation

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appear with all possible decency. however not to mention her indecorous situation, I will ^mention ~~say~~ how much decency will permit me to say I saw, and how much further I will ^leave to the Luxuriant imagination of others -- I beheld her naked Knees ---------- the saddle saw the rest. –

Mallwyd

we arrived here about 1 o clock. Eat a famous and renovating dinner after which we took a survey of the Country. about a quarter of a mile from the Inn is a Little Picturesque Bridge and Mill, the river has a ^small ~~little~~ fall, but in appearance rather artificial. from this spot we continued under the Mountain till we reach Dinas Mowddy, which is a bundle of dirty Huts arranged somewhat in the form of a street. directly

Dinas Mawddwy

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over this abortion of a Town rises a stupendious and curious formed mountain called Moel Terwyn ~~[illegible]~~ (viz ~~[illegible]~~) ~~[illegible]~~ there are some odd ups and downs, ins and outs, on its side ^most queerly constructed: which extraordinary look struck me precisely the same (as to what the whole resembled) as it did my friend Underwood: ~~my~~ ^our exclamation was as ingenious, as Mr Wests, when his Classical eye first beamed on the divine Apollo [5] -- tho my Mountain was no Mohawk Warrior, yet there could have been no such warrior had not there ^been my mountain's semblance. several sketches were made of various parts surrounding, when we returned to our comfortable habitation, nearly wet to the skin, as the awkward elements were so unmannerly as to pelt us without mercy all the time. at 10 we adjourned for the night – my little ^Toe being viley exruciating

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Mallwyd

July 15th.

Unfortunate mortals – . It rains like Devil, 9 o clock in the morning and no prospect of seeing a fingers length in front. went into the church yard where are now existing a few ancient Yews large in circumference, and vast in observance. My friend Underwood conscious they are not Less aged than one thousand 12 months. our Host said the Largest is 7 and 20 feet round – . few of the People speak English, yet all the ^inscriptions on the tombstones are in that Language: one thing I have forgot to remember almost ever since the commencement of this truly valuable recital of circumstance, which is that instead of the Elegant goat, every animal is Pig, at every turning there is a Pig in every house there is a Pig, nay every body is a Pig --- .

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at 1 o clock it cleared up and we ventured forth to draw. Made the first coloured sketch from Nature looking towards Dinas Mowddy. on our return to the Inn, there came a group of four pedestrians fatigued famished and filthy. they seemed men very thick upwards and were bound for Birmingham. - Underwood thought them buckle formers. ~~[illegible]~~ Was our gallantry equal to Tommy Underwood's - !!! the distance sound of a Carriage roll'd in redoubling sounds across the winding Mountains, a few moments and the vehecle was at the door of the Cross Foxes (Poetic Sign!) the ^night was far advanced the lowering clouds gathered low

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and dark in the Bosom of the Valley the coming storm, which threatened instant destruction to the houseleeks traveller, produced a concattenation of circumstances truly critical. There was at this moment not a vacant room either with or without a bed, this doleful intelligence was communicated to the content, of the gay Machine by our civil Hostess. the consternation such horrible news created on the minds of three heaven formed fairs was not of long duration,

for the alert and elegant minded Underwood, sprang to the side of the Charriot, and in the accents of a Chesterfield proffered his bed and dwelling, his words

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were mine, so they now possess of a good resting place for the night and we were shoved in among the Birmingham Buckle formers. the Modest but Amiable Bashfullness of my friend so overpower'd his memory, that on their accepting his heroic offer, he Left the Carriage door – – . They found the way out themselves – and he rejoined me. what I ought to have done I will not say. – 10 ^o clock the Buckle Makers are gone to rest the exchange of beds was not for the better. but then the satisfaction we had rendered ourselves and the comfort to others rendered our rest more pleasant than had we been poked into garrets

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divested of such occurences. at 10 this morning we saw the fair charrioteers off, then the Buckle Makers, and next ourselves. Our walk this day (16th July) was through Dinas Mowddy. it raining extremely hard. however notwithstanding this we managed to draw a Picturesque water mill about a mile from Dinas, continuing our Journey for some miles the Country varied little from that Hitherto. only the Outline of the Mountains became somewhat bolder and more broken by rock. about a mile before the View of Cader Idris opens from the narrow vale of the Mallwyd road; there presents a most exquisite mountain both in shape and colour, ~~[illegible]~~ and which we made a slight memorandum

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Dolgellau

of called Cwy Avon. after the ascention of the opposite hill; journeying onward some certain distance, the stupendious Cader rises in vast Piles of Chaotic grandeur, surrounded on every side by lesser heaps of cloud <u>on</u> shadowed hills. as we nearer drew to the Town of Dolgelly ^on ~~to the~~ right we discovered the Mountains of Beddhellert and Snowdon. This is a Magnifficent assemblage of dwellings for wales, which as they are so collected are termed a Town, which is strangly stragling and oddly connected. here we arrived at five determining to stay a few days, but the beastlyness of the Inn totally upsett all our plans, and after a sleep incomodious and uncomfortable we arose ^ and

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started at 10. persueing our way through a country more delightfull than conception can conceive. the road is most romanticly situated by an arm of the sea! which Joins the River a mile or two from Dolgelly. the Grand Line of Cader strickes itself over the vast Chain of hills beneath, to the very shores of the Oacean: the View about a one mile from Barmouth, looking towards the Country we had Left, was yet ^more grand ~~[illegible]~~ than any thing my imagination even with the <u>combined</u> discription of an Osian could picture. the links of Mountains Towering one above the other untill they ~~[illegible]~~ pierced the very heavens; whilst the blue Mist of distance veiled their forms in

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Barmouth

additional sublimity & the observance such a scene untill this moment I had never beheld, and such a scene human talents are far beneath the power of conveying its Just Idea. at 5 we arrived at Barmouth the Giberalter of North Wales. a strange built place on the side of a Steep Rock, the houses are piled one above the other, some have entrances at their roof, others windows in their chimneys and some ^no windows ~~[illegible]~~ at all. this is a gay place for bathing, here the Ladies sans ceremonie, stroll into the sea ^like Eve ~~[illegible]~~, with small rayment around their centres. Not a whole regiment of males, each with a Magnifying glass nor the surge of a Biscayan Ocean could possibly, others call a Blush on their bodies or wash the

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time unbronzing innocence of custom. however, this exhibition of Mountains may be classed in natural beauty with Snowdon and Idris. here we heard the Welsh Harp in the highest perfection, the player was a young man whose soul seemed embowell'd in his harp strings. the energy with which he executed the various airs we called for and the fine taste with which he added variations did him vast honour. the Music was well adapted to the Instrument it being of an extreme wild Eolean tone, divested of all the Sundry tricks of Modern Mechanical intricacy in order to Meliorate and give an elegant and <u>Graceful</u> harmony to its tones; like the Puffed

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Breeches,[6] and puckered coats of the present race invented to ~~[illegible]~~ ^add those forgotten parts of the human body, which ^escaped Natures ~~[illegible]~~ memory. the Welsh Music is wild, grand and pathetic. yet after a length of time, it becomes rather Monotonous to Ear, one great advantage which the ~~[illegible]~~ Scotch Airs have over those of Wales, as in them there is more variety of little varied turns. – we made one or two sketches of the opposite Mountains, and Left Barmouth on the 19th. for Harlech. the road to the Left for the whole way is flanked by the sea, on the right by ~~[illegible]~~ ^bare and rocky heights. there is no view of the least consequence untill within a mile

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Harlech

and half of Harlech, when a vast and infinite collection of Mountains present themselves, Snowdon high above this Mob of Earthly Warts, veiled thick in sable Atmosphere. the sun rolled into a sort of large Bay at their foot; and on a high rocky promontory in the foreground rose the Castle of Harlech an Ancient and Splendid Radcliffian [7] erection: the scene grew less grand as we approached nearer the Village, and at last it was totally obliterated by odd Huts, arranged ~~a~~ ^in strange fashion by way of a Town. this place is most Romanticly situated on a high Rock which over looks the sea and the distant Coast of Carnarvonshire, the Castle stands on a part

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of the same adamantine projection, and is a square building flanked every way by lofty round Towers. and on each of those which commands the sea, are erected two others most smartly ornamented near their Battlements by Corbels. the entrance is defended by pair yet smaller and the Grand Gate, is blest with a couple still larger than all, having a similar two in its rear which commands the court aspect. there is a winding terrace down to the foot of the rock on which this Eddifice is built. from whence is a wide swampy marsh about three qurts of a Mile from the Sea, here the parishioners have the priviledge of feeding [illegible] Cattle and Cutting Turf.

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here we remained for near two days and at the Expiration of which time we left it accompanied by a Guide for Menturog. the whole of this road is exquisitely picturesque, and from its wondrous variety in scene, claims the particular attention of every perambulator, equestrian or other. after leaving the low marsh of Harlech and Then [illegible], we ascended a steep hill which lead into a Most romantic road, bounded by rugged Mountains exquisitely grand. at the foot of one of them is a large, deep, and black lake more sequestered and soul saddening than

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Maentwrog

than any thing we had yet seen. a few steps farther and on the Right we could behold the pretty and rich cultivated vale of Festiniogg, and on our left this sable watered expanse. a pleasing and pretty walk brought ^us about 8 o clock in the Evening to the Inn at Manturogg. -

July 22d.

Went to the Waterfalls about a Mile from this place, the first is uncommonly grand it is called Llyn-yg-gfron. [8] its torrent rushes between two steep and finely wooded precipices commencing at an immense height above the river's Level, it first rolls rapidly along a steep shelve of rock, into a small deep and hollow basson, here, a projection

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of rock arrests its passage, when it again rushes round this Angle, and falls with the most thundering violence down a perpendicular surface of an ^amazing depth; at the bottom it is received [illegible] into the river whose water is ~~of~~ ~~a~~ perfectly black. It is an impossibility to give the least idea of the tremendous effect the whole circumstance of this scene either by the Pencil or the Pen. the extreme difficulty of obtaining any sight of so wonderful and romantic an occurrence makes it but little Known as the only method of obtaining such observance is most difficult and dangerous. being down a descent

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nearly perpendicular, and all the dependence to preserve yourself entire was by the shrubs and stripling ash. The Fall above is by no means so fine, yet for those who have not viewed the former would think it exquisite. the whole fall,

is one mass of foam and spray, the basson which receives it underneath is very large and full of huge rocks. this has, and is constantly visited and drawn by all who come to Mantwurogg. after dinner we sallied forth for BethKelert. over a troublesome and elaborate road. the way was more than ordinarily fatiguing the Country uninteresting and Bleak. what perhaps might add to its look-

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Aberglaslyn / Beddgelert

ing ~~in~~ so unfavourably in my sight, was our having been disappointed by the entrance of the tide over the Traeth . ~~which~~ and prevented our crossing the sands at the feet of those Mountains which so happily surround the lower extremity of Snowdon. after much toil to our muscular abilities, we again obtained the main road and a Mile or two brought us to the Pont over Glas-Llin.[9] this is by far the most barbaric or apparently uncivilized Morsel of Wales I had yet beheld. two almost perpendicular rocks of a height a cut above tremendous, rises on each side of a river which rolls with in the most furious rapid style

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ever river rolled in the hollow sound of its waters, make thunder appear but the Whinings of a six months Infant. across this angry roaring torrent a bridge of a single Arch throws itself with much taste and picturesque excellence. it is perfectly suited in its rude state of Masonry to this as rude a scene. – but behold the grand climax of all its terrible greatness, underneath this stony semicircle, low mid the bowels of the parting rock in a gully deep as the Devil's dwelling; down with the most ear rending noise, rushes the already angry waves, if angry then?

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now all passion. down this Hell on Earth they rush, and roar themselves to silence. Here we met the gay triumvirate, Francia Mr Smith and Tissor . they returned with us to BethKelert and then we visited in the course of the Evening a small Lake about two miles above the Mill.

24th.

the Junto Left us and we drew the water of the Pont – Aber-glas-Llyn - being ~~the~~ ^a most admirable specimen of water both in colour and Mode of rushing. the Immense rocks so happily interspersed amidst the channel creates a number of picturesque interruptions, which are eminently adapted

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for study both in colour and form. the Vale of BethKelert is ruggedly grand, and rendered more pleasing by the pretty interspersion of now and then a growth of beach, birch, Mountain Ash, and Cottage. The Village and bridge is by far the Most ellegable for picture making than any we had hitherto seen. there is likewise a lovely little church, elegantly adorned by a neat variety of trees from the Radcliffian assemblage. it is finely place on the banks of a rippling river, whose gentle noise adds much to its other beauties here also may be viewed a Mill an Alpine species of bridge and a bold chain of Hills towards the Lake we lately visited. above it there is also one more, but from the report of Mr Nicolson it is not worth seeing. –

25th.

rained all day, however towards the evening we did manage to make a sketch or two. and add a few years to the Life of an old Lady, who died some 60 years ago at BethKelert. we could get no supper for the double souled Methodest preacher who drew the bowel of the Whole Village about him in an adjoining mansion for the purposes of saving the their consciences from being made the devil's looking glasses.

26th.

Left this place at 7. in order to ascend the huge and gigantic Mass of earth Called Snowdon, whose height above the sea is well Known to my friend sir Thomas. after a walk of 4 miles we met with a Mr Goodwin of Llanrwst who was to ascend with us and two of his minors as guides. our march

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Snowdon

commenced about 10. and after a most fatiguing and difficult tramp, we at last arrived at its summit envelloped in a dark thick mist. one side of this vast Mountain is perpendicular for near half a Mile at whose foot ~~is~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ^are two bright green Lakes: the other has a descent somewhat gradual though still extremely steep and terrific. as the surface is here and there broken by huge Mass of rock of an enormous Magnitude. on this declivity are ^also two Lakes perfectly black which by the stillness of their waters and the deep reflection admitted of the Mountain, adds considerably to the grandeur and effect of the whole. the track of country in this direction is certainly fine yet nothing to the opposite. several pools between the Hills are discernible

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and over all the sea. the day being not one of those very favourable for long observance as to distance, My account cannot be particular. the effect on the other side was beyond all Human conception sublime. by degrees the Vapour rolled ~~off~~ in many places, leaving the clouds ~~[illegible]~~ in the hollow tops of the Hills beneath, which rose off like Volumes from Etna. the undistinct observance of the particular forms, gave wonderful breadth and dreamy like appearance to this already too unlike ~~any thing but~~ an effect common to Mortal faculties; as there seemed a sort of supernatural film, glazed over the distant Landscape, which was so ingeniously stirred up with the clouds that, by degrees,

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earth ^and air became the same: ~~[illegible]~~ and seemed as tho' these two elements were going to exchange places. the subject is too awefuly grand to admit either of humbug nonsense of human ability in describing, therefore will now descend with all possible care and expedition. at the foot of this rugged length, stands a small Hovel or Human sty, where we in consort with the civil Mr Goodwin continued to Eat Eggs, Bacon, and Black bread, our moisture was milk and water, our attendant was skin and Bones, aged and civil, she looked as if the world afforded her not the common occurrences of existence; yet she possess'd 1000 pounds and a Large fat Family. Llan quethlyn is the name of the this place, and near is a Lake of respectable expanse, which produces Carp of

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Caernarfon

great delicacy. the road is good and runs close by the edge of this water whose opposite shore is bounded by high rocky Mountains. the last of which from its peculiar form and appearance is called the Wolf rock. we Journeyed onward and about 6 miles brought us to Caernarfon. here as to the dwelling Mansions nothing is noticeable. the street seem well enough, and most Vastly broad. the houses old and not vastly clean, the people stupid and not very civil. the Castle and walls are highly curious and meritorious in observance, it covers a ~~vast~~ ^great tract of ground, and is well off for Towers being mostly Octagon or [illegible]. it is not woefully ruined, and affords great pleasure both to the Artist and the Antiquary ---- met Mr Thomson.

27th.

Left this place, <u>wondrous</u> to relate at 6 o

Llanberis

clock and after walking about 6 miles arrived at the foot of the Lower Lake of Llanberis. the morning was all serenity and peace, not an atmospheric motion broke the ~~[illegible]~~ ^calm stillness of this watery expanse, the mist of morning cloathed the distant mountain in air, which gave an undicision to the scene and added additional grandeur to the Castle of [illegible] . [10] this is one large Tower situated on a rocky ~~[illegible]~~ ^eminence projecting boldly into the Lake. While the huge cloud Capped heights rose in sublime magnifficence around it, reflecting their proud forms into the Crystal Liquid, every accident produced additional beauties to this exquisite collection of Nature's incidents. not a sound disturbed the Ears of our enraptured community. it was Sunday, 8 o clock, a heavenly Morning

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and we were in a boat. how truly Romantic!! the dashing stroke of the lusty watermen's abilities, awoke our already slumbering sense of hearing that we might enjoy with a still higher zest, the silence and the scene. by degrees we

moved to the regular cadence of the oar into the bowels of the Landscape the rocks of [illegible] Dolbadarn castle hung with tremendous awe above our heads, we leaped on shore, eat beef and bread, and saw the time worn eddifice. from the stile of its architecture its origin must have been far far distant, there are still a few outwork walls with mutilated loops perceptable upon the rock it stands upon, the whole presented to my ideas

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from every circumstance, a most perfect scene, and such as Ossian knew. Leaving this on our rear we Journeyed onward by the side of the upper Lake to the Village of Llanberis, a poor miserable thumb and finger full of Huts. where with considerable difficulty and dirt we procured some Tea. it was now 3 o clock when we moved on for Capel-Kerrig 10 miles farther. a quarter of a mile brought us to a scene perfectly opposite to the calm and delightful one we had so recently beheld. a very narrow pass amidst masses of rock enormous to the sight and terrible to the mind led to the end of that days exertions. this spot presents to the traveller so desolate, so dreary, so aweful, and so terror striking a view, that every discription will give but a sorry idea of its Sublimity.

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the vast pile of rocks towering one on each other, to a height nearly perpendicular for many many thousand feet, then Mountain upon Mountain reared their heads, and last far piercing midst the heavens, rose in black majesty the triple headed Snowdon. the roaring waters rushed in time worn tracts on every side, ~~from the~~ forming ~~large~~ loud cataracts and distant Lakes. for four miles this museum of chaotic terrors presents itself when the way, winds ruggedly rude and uneasy round a stony Mountain side from whence at a considerable distance is descried the lakes and New Inn at Capel-Kerrig. nothing very interesting is observable in our front the whole way except the new turnpike road [11] which when finished some say will be

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Capel Curig

pleasant for both man and beast, as the old one is the devil. ~~and~~ [illegible] on looking back Snowden and its attendants present themselves neatly piled in a picturesque order to the sight., this is the perpendicular side of the mountain and consequently the most terrific and horrifying. on our arrival at the inn, we were surrounded by Mob of drunken Welsh-men all blood, dirt and scratchs, which they had obtained singing Psalms and fighting. this is the Old Inn, and such a one, as, Authors fancy when they wish to Kill a way worn traveller amidst the civil crafty cloak of wood emboweled therein, [illegible] such was that of *Raymond in the Monk* ,[12] such

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was that of *Mountfardington in the New Monk* ,[13] and such were many others in many other Books. our bedroom to be sure if festoons of any Kind are admitted as ornaments, was elegantly and profusely decorated with Cobwebs in good taste and dust. the black beams, rotten laths, and cold slates, composed the ceiling, lose boards made the floor, between whose openings the apartment beneath could be observed. our furniture was a stool and chair which we placed against the door to prevent intruders; and the walls and partition was hansomely hung with woolen petticoats old stockings, pieces of timber and dirty shifts. such was and twenty times a worse idea must be

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Nant Ffrancon

conceived of this our sleeping hole. but notwithstanding all the dreads that might be supposed to arise from such a concatenation of objects, ~~[illegible]~~ we both slept well. at 8 the next Morning 28th we set off for Aber 20 miles distance. after passing the grand Valley of Nanfranlin tho' nothing compared to that above Llanberris. here are two picturesque Lakes, which in conjunction with one other forms a fine fall of water, over a bold projecting rock. about two Miles onward, the view to the rear was excessively fine the day being rainy and consequently full of clouds the broad Masses of Shaddow produce gave much solemnity

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to the scene. the forms of the high and steep mountain partook more of the alpine shape than any we had yet seen, they rose in larger piles on each other and the Lines became more broken and varied. on leaving this the road is by no means interesting Lord Penrhyn's slate quarry is curious and productive. the face of the Land surrounding, by his order, is ingeniously besprinkled with clear white cottages whimsically formed in the bastard Gothic. which

dwellings are occupied (much horror to his Lordship) by his quarry-men. At 4 we arrived at Aber where we dined and intended to sleep. But

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Aber

Judge my horror at the sound, the house was full, and not a bed to be had. already I had trailed my incumbered body full 20 tedious miles, weary'd and way worn, foot sore and exhausted. however good spirits of my own and those of our Host, renovated my dying endeavors, and at 6 we set off for Conway 9 miles farther. from the road which winds at the foot of Penman Mower we saw Anglesey and in the offing the Isle of Man. At 9 o clock we crawl'd into this place where a good supper, and as good a bed made me "Myself again" ---

28th.30

Remained in the place of Entertainment till after dinner, when I [illegible] towards

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Conwy

the Castle. which is built on a rocky promontory with much military ability, and masonry strength. it is a Fortress of many Towers one of which has most strangely lost its lower parts, or foundation. appearing most tremendous to the gratified observer at its foot. the town is well begirt by its walls ancient, happily interspersed with towers and Gates. this place is crammed with objects curious and interesting to the Antiquary or Painter – . by some means I have lost a few days in my account of the diurnal calculation. we have seen a Lord!!!! And Breakfasted.

August the first.

rained all day, consequently drew not a whit. ---

2d.

rained again. yet made a few sketches.

In the Evening Mr Underwood Mr Nicolson and his friend Left me all alone at the Inn, my Invalid lower extremity being not in health sufficient, from the late violent exertion to pursue my way on foot. Walked with several of the gay Ladies of Conway – not much beauty. Varley supped with me ---

3d.

up at 4 o clock and set forward to Join my party at Llanrwst on the Coach Box. the morning smelt well and was clear. the road between Conway and this place is extremely beautiful and picturesque, the valley being delightfully ornamented with the stream of "Conway's rapid flood",[14] elegantly and richly bordered with the verdant addition of beech, birch, wet hay and hedges

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Llanrwst

however to take this vale "for all in all," it certainly is the most luxuriant to the ocular perception I had seen in Wales. the flanking hills are not so rudely naked as those in the bowels of the Country, their appearance therefore accords more with the vale beneath and consequently throws a happy degree of harmony which is in addition pleasing. at 6 I arrived at this place a respectable Market Town, prettily situated on the Conway's Banks, has also a handsome bridge ^built by Inigo Jones [15] which possesses a peculiar porclettic ability. ~~[illegible]~~ about a quarter of a Mile stands an old Mansion of the Gwidir Family.[16] has got a pidgeon house and gothic staircase, a water mill and, and great Bull dog.

4th.
Sunday.

It rained till four o clock when Underwood and myself accompanyed Mr Goodwin to his Lead Mines [17] about a mile from hence. In a wood to the right is a small chapel belonging to the house below already mentioned. Gwydir - we also visited the Church of Llanrwst which contains several curious monuments a stone coffin &.c.

5th.

In the Events of yesterday I drew at the request of Underwood the pretty female Kitty the maid of the Inn – he being more than commonly attracted by her bodily charms. this morning we were amused, delighted, and astonished by the performance of the Musician of this place. his powers are great his appearance quite the reverse; cloddish in the extreme, fingers like the extremities of a bear, yet

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they possess the agility an Handell. add to this, he is a postilion. yes, this man of science plays the Harp and he drives. O! [illegible] - Mr Nicolson said very truly that such an ocular observance, proves that this spot possesses not one single Gentleman, surely had their dwelt one, and had he heard my present subject play from this moment he would no longer have ^driven and from that moment the world, would have been gratified with the Luxury of his abilities.

6th.

Mr Nicholson left us to return to Conway. Underwood and I went again to Gwyidir house which we sketched, and stroamed a short distance down the Vale. Mr Goodwin obliged us much, and supped with us.

Denbigh

7th.

we left Llanrwst about ten o clock for Denbigh, the road from thence is one series of hills cultivated to their summits which gives the country a general resemblance of Devonshire. after the walk of a few miles the view back is extremely fine, as the long range of Mountains extend ^themselves in a grand line along the Horizon: above the rest Snowdon still ~~[illegible]~~ maintained its superior magnifficence, and sublimity, by the quantity of Clouds which veiled its real height from human observance. this walk was excessively fatiguing and not very interesting – we had a view of Denbigh for 4 or 5 miles, before we arrived. it is a vastly nice and comfortable Town, the Houses are (some) ancient and odd. the Castle

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stands on a rock, commanding an extensive prospect of the rich and Luxurious Vale of Clwydde which is by far the most superior in every respect to any I have yet seen. –

8th.

Left Denbigh about 10 o clock for Haywarden. the road is extremely pleasant, and would highly delight Mortals whose views are very extensive, as they may see an extent of Country wonderfully pleasing. both of Hill, Vale, sea, and sky. this was at the at the brow of Moel Arthur a little Mountain, which the road twisted around, leading to a dreary walk of some miles, which brought us out, amidst a world of trees and coal pits. on we walked, and after much fatigue and difficulty, we passed

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Chester

through Northorpe and arrived at Haywarden about ½ past 5 o clock – where we dined saw nothing worth observance, therefore proceeded in a post chaise to Chester.

9th.

Chester is a queer collection of Human residences, formed in a method singular and curious. old black beams, carved curlicues, and leaden windows, formed these aged erections. the streets are not very wide the shops are on the first floor of the buildings and recede a considerable way back, enough to form a gallery, free from rain, where the venders wares may bee purchased without the least inconvenience of wind or weather – .[18] we left this on the 10th

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about 11 o clock, walking over a paved road for many miles, to the great annoyance of my lower extremities. this promenade is far from being interesting, the country is flat, and like all others of a similar surface. much cultivation, and many trees enrich this earthly carpet. In the distance we saw the rocky hill on which Beeston Castle stands, the shape is extremely picturesque and gratifying. about 11 miles from Chester we stoped at a single house, where we dined it is called S/Land away head. here we fortunately found a return Post Chaise, into which we steped, and in a short time

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Northwich

reached where the large Salt Manufactory is.[19] we again commenced perambulating and in an hour and ¾ arrived at Northwich in perfect darkness, which is rather more than 7 miles from our last place of arrival. here we remained the whole night better attended and more comfortably refreshed than at any place of public dwelling we had entered since the commencement of our tour.

10th.

at 7 we left this in a post Chaise, more like Gentleman tourists than dirty Artists. we Breakfasted at Macclesfield and proceeded onwards for Buxton. this road is worse than any road in the world, we were almost shook

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Buxton

to death. the ascent and descent of the Derbyshire Hills is so uncomfortably arranged. on looking back a perfect Panoramic View presents itself: On this desperate rugged and disagreeable road the Carriage broke down, and with much difficulty and slow proceedings we reached Buxton.

11th.
Sunday.

Nothing wondrous – beheld the interesting town. the crescent is a very fine stone Building – [illegible].

12th.

saw Poole Cavern. Much grand effect, and a good situation for Bastille subjects.

13. -

saw the Lover’s Leap about one Mile from Buxton, in company with Mr
and Miss Rebello. and my friend Underwood. it most undoubtedly is a romantic scene, and would have been beautiful had not our tastes been elevated by N. Wales. a small rivulet runs at the bottom of this Chasm, for nothing else it can be called.

- 14th.

we Left Buxton on foot for Castleton, distant 12 miles, over a most uninteresting and Barren Country, hilly and Heathy, one Village we passed though called Tiddswood/comb which has a pretty Gothic Church built much like a Cathedral. – between this and Castleton we saw a great variety of

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Castleton

Mines externally, both ancient and Modern. the first view of Castletonis pleasing and singular as it lays in a rich Valley beneath, and high reared behind it is perceptable Man Tor, or the Shivering Mountain round the summit of which there is a roman entrenchment. at its foot is the celebrated Odin Mine - the town of Castleton is celebrated also for the grand obscure and truly romantic infernal curiosity called the Devils Peak, the

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[illegible] to this [damage] of wonders is rather neatly arranged along the edge of a stream, which runs from the Cavern. whose Mouth is awefully wide, and the ~~[illegible]~~ yawn is rather capacious. the rock in whose bowels, this queer rock belongs, is perfectly perpendicular in front, exquisitely befringed with hanging shrub trees long grass &c - on its summit is perched with much antique grandeur and pretty appearance ^a Castle, whose age is Vast, by the smallness of its remains.

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the Inside of this natural and ingenious exertion of Nature, is highly calculated for study, its colour, effect, and outlines, are grand at every step; the different appartments and the Choirs, shewn by the guide are extremely ~~grand~~ fine but the most singular is the voyage across the river, as the person, must be prostrate in a small boat, for fear of his head being broke against the rocky ceiling which in this Spot is extremely low. – After being immured in this dungeon for so long a time as two hours

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the effect of the dawn of day is delightly pleasing – being opposed by the strong dark and your eye full of the red light of the Candle adds an additional strength of Colour to the beam which gives it the appearance of a very bright blue light. here I made several studies of different parts of the Cave. Our party on this expedition was Miss Rebello and her Maid, Mr Underwood, a Man servant and my self. Leaving this for Matlock, we passed Middleton dale,[20] a spot of considerable beauty and full of

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Chatsworth House

fine subjects for the pencil, as the sides of the rocky projections were finely broke by rude buildings of Kilns ._._.. Not far from here we visited Chatsworth House a Seat of the Duke of Devon^{r}. there is nothing very singularly amusing here, it is a great empty Case full of awkward rooms clumsy chairs and no pictures, to be sure the Stair Case and a room or two are painted all over in a sort of method, by someone who must have painted by the Mile. here are a suite of rooms which

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they said Mary Queen of Scots had slept in. the bed is extremely high the Curtains are crimson Velvet richly embroidered, and the Tapestry of the room is finely worked from designs by Rubens, which must have been a more recent decoration than the rest of these appartments.[21] the next we visited was Haddon Hall a seat of the duke of Rutland not a chair in the House, tho' all the Old tapestry is hanging and the whole air of the building carries the mind back to the days of ancient gloomy magnifficence.

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the building is a Castellated Mansion about the time of Henry 7th . the terrace is magnifficent, the Hall is not very large nor handsome, there is some rusty armour, which I longed to steal, and a few big Boilers in the Kitchen.

We next arrived at Matlocka most pleasing situation, and highly delightful on account of its walks, town river &c. - after remaining this delightful spot for a few days we Left it for Derby. on this Journey nothing out of the common sort of Country presents

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Derby

itself almost a mile ~~a mile~~ from the road we turned off through L[d]. Scarsdales ~~house~~ park to see Kiddstone House, a place of much magnificence full of fine pictures and gay marble. rich plate and gold furniture. Mrs Garnet the Old Housekeeper displays an uncommon degree of polite Loquacity, to which with the singular wizandness of her person adds interest to interest. At Derby we saw the Pocelane manufactory, and the next morning I left it on the roof of the Coach for

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London, at which place I arrived the day following in good health and poor. So ends my 6 week Zig Zag of Human Incidents.

- Amen.[22]

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the General Character of the welsh which I gathered partly from ^my own observations and partly from those informations some few more ingenuous than their Country man gave me is this. they are extremely selfish, and if it is possible to cheat, or in any way take in a stranger the will, if one settles amongst them as a farmer or otherwise every art is used to injure him. they hamstring his cattle open his Gates and break his inclosures in short every thing possible

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by which they can annoy him they do. but in some degree this may be accounted for, they are most commonly Methodists, and consequently ----------s the women are of the most disagreeable dispositions one moment all good humour and affability the next all sulking, and ill nature, and apparently without any course whatsoever: they are continually Knitting both walking and sitting even in their religous Bawling Houses, their person are slovenly and dirty

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without shoes or stockings, their huge Ebony extremities create uncommon interresting ideas. this sex are mature very young and old very young, the Men are apparently in this respect like others, tho' in ~~[illegible]~~ they differ much, being divested of every noble appearance and wanting all those points which a <u>race</u> of <u>true true Britons</u> ought to be marked with. these are more Pigs than Children consequently more dirt than otherwise.

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Accommodations
Shrewsbury.
At the sign of the Unicorn, may be found a clean, comfortable & respectable accommodation. the people are civil. Only the landlady is watchful of her opposite neighbours least her customers should seduce their daughters or their daughters seduce her customers. – mark !!! there lives a silversmith opposite who has a daughter what she wants we possess –. Welshpool is 17 miles from Shrewsbury the chief and best Inn, is at the Royal Oak kept by Mr Keate an extreme civil LandLord, the accommodations are likewise very fair, and the eatables are

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27

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wholesome and digestive. this Inn stands at the foot of the Town and commands an aspect up its centre street – Cann Office is 14 miles and a half from the Last mentioned place, a single white and naked nasty house, [illegible] Mrs is very civil, the rooms are dripping with damp, (and the Servants cannot speak English) which I would pardon, but damn it they are so stupidly brutish. the less I say of the better, it is the only place to be found there, therefore the best must be made of a bad bargain. Mallwyd is 14 miles from the last mentioned place. The reception here is extremely good the people are more than ordinarily civil and every thing is cheap, pallatable

28

and wholesome. Two pretty attendants wait on the call of each hungry guest, ^but in short I can not considering the country it is in, say too much in favour of so delightful ^an accommodation – Dolgelly is 12 Miles from the last place. a straggling strange and stumbling town. the inn is the Golden Lion, the people civil, ^the place nasty. you are crammed into a Common ~~[illegible]~~ ^Sewer of a parlour, the reservoir, for Bag men, Itinerant Artists and sorts of fleeting customers. the Misery we experienced from this truly Vulgar assemblage together, with the awkward & unpolished assiduity of the female Mares of Waiters, so annoyed Sir Thomas in Myself, that notwithstanding

29

my invalid toe, the next Morning we Left, the dirt, ordinary and fine scenery for Barmouth - Barmouth is 10 miles from Dolgelly a queer sort of place, like a town taking flight, as the dwellings are ^almost all in the air. the Inn is decent on the whole; the Corsygedol Arms is the Mark for Knowing the place of Public residence; in it you find a good ordinary and every thing comfortable discreet – the company are respectable, as most come for the Benefit of washing their figures in the Sea. here is a harper good wine and Brandy; stupid waiting and dear washerwomen. –

30

Harlech is 10 Miles (and those most stupid) from Barmouth. the Town is small and speckles the surface of an immense rock on which stands its Castle. the Inn at this place is rather better than from its appearance could be supposed. a small whitewashed sitting room up one pair of rotten stairs, whose Leaden casement permitted the Entrance of Every rude blast: ~~[illegible]~~ which waisted more farthing candles than might otherwise have been saved. the decorations were simple and Elegant. the floor was cool and airy as the appartures between each board was rather wide

31

or so. our feeding was clean wholesome and <u>fair</u>; but our waiter was the “<u>fairest</u> of the <u>fair</u> all blushing beauty innocence and 19. the pleasing smirk of frisking youth played in exquisite forms around her mouth, which created a sort of undulation on her cheek, most admirably charming to my gallant friend Underwood. – talking of the Maid puts me in mind of our Beds which indeed were famous. the room was truly that pictured by “youthful poets when they write” of bloody rogues who with the fairer semblance, invite a weary

32

raymond to their throne. the damp dew trickled down the once white plaister’d walls of the appartment one shattered door lead god Knows where, whilst the other ^lead to the Anti chamber to ours, which contained the much famed form of Gwyn Owen, the pretty waiter!!!!!

~~Maenturrogg~~ Maent#rog, 8 Miles from our last residence, here is much good, convenient, and respectable accommodation: the Beds were very good, the sitting room dark and dreary, the Eatables satisfying and comfortable the porter good and the Washing dear. Another Miss Owen keeps this celebrated hovel.

Beddkellert, ^8 miles there is an inn to be sure – a welsh one, a nasty one, and a one

33

by no means consonant to English cleanliness. the good people most undoubtedly do all in their power to render things as well as they think comfortable: this was the only place that gave me the [illegible], vapours, or blue devils: ~~[illegible]~~ if a man did not mind what he said, it might be said to be costly.

Caernarvon 12 miles from our Late residence the King's head not the first Inn, most undoubtedly but one of fair Aspect, both in eating drinking and sleeping, and best of all, wonderfully reasonable,

Llanberis 8 miles from this last mentioned dwelling. a small Hovel, "worse than get out" – where the butter was all thumb marks and the bread all treacle. it is cheap certainly for our tea was but 6 pence each –.

Capel-Kerrig. 12 miles farther an Inn little better, either in appearance or convenience

34

the people were boreishly polite all we got here was tea and Eggs. this was the delectable mansion, with the apartments of terrible aspect. it seems a place for Murder, bloody sheets and Thieves!! –

Aber is 20 Miles a neat clean house with its desolation as a place for passing residence the Bull's Head. here we faired comfortably and quick, the transition from our late palace made this shine with tenfold splendour all was every thing, and comfort.

Conwy 9 Miles. the Bull's Head the very best Inn in every respect we had occupied since our Leaving London. Kept by a M^{rs} Read and a whole regiment of daughters. all sorts of accommodations both day and night are pure, wholesome

35

and certain. but they allow neither soap, nor Harper. It is otherwise the post office, and the head inn.

Llanrwst is 12 miles distant from Conway. The King's head, very comfortable considering. the people are extremely civil and feed their customers very reasonably and wholesome. besides which, there is to found the best Harper in all North Wales. wonderful to say here was a gay wash Ball.

Denbigh 20 miles. The Bull a very pleasant house indeed, kept by one of the ~~[illegible]~~ most civil old woman I ever met with, every circumstance of existence was good, besides the felicity of a Male waiter and the company of a droll Bagman &c.

36

Haywaden is about 20 Miles from this said Bull, we only took a sort of glance at the comforts. but indeed they seemed so few that I am glad we had not time sufficient to discover more, as the Habitation was not altogether pleasing and the Land Lady similarly formal as to Manner. this is the Stags head & the first Inn.

Chester 7 Miles distant from Harden. the sign the Red Lion kept by a M^{rs} Roberts. here we were annoyed in no small degree by divers and sundry intoxicated Militia Men, who sprawled about in every direction, the accomodations here is tollerably good. tho' the best In is kep by one M^{r} Paul, near

37

the Cathedral.

Northwich ^24 miles the Angel an excellent House excellent attendance, and excellent Beds, here we experienced the utmost civility, the reason obvious, for we had ordered a Post Chaise for the next Morning.

Macclesfield 13 Miles, another Angel. here we Breakfasted, pretty decently upon the Whole – and proceeded for Buxton – which is 11 miles, which place we arrived about 1 o clock. here we fed privately from the Hotel in comfort cleanliness and good company.

at Castleton – 12 Miles distant is the sign of the Castle a place

38

unsociable in aspect, full of [illegible] from breakfast to bedtime, uncomfortable dinners, dirty rooms and horrid beds with sheets like wasps, in short every accomodation is abominably [illegible], and what is worse (than being oblige to sleep eat, and drink so tediously) the bills is dear in the extreme and the Servants Victuals &c are charged equal to the M^{rs} or M^{r}. at Edensor all is beautiful and delicious, comfortable, clean and wholesome, heartily enjoyable

39

delicate, amiable and exquisite, in short its inconveniences are comfort.

the next was Matlock a private Lodging but like Buxton fed from the Inn, here we existed synonimous to the above mentioned place in comfort, ease, and no danger of dying by dirt. Derby the George and the head Inn. Beds good, dining heartily, a french waiter stiff as a Poker and civil as a Coward, every thing but the beds were truly desolate and uncomfortable, dark, dreary and horrible well calculated for the

40

inspiration of the Blue Devils. here I end my accommodations and once more enjoy the comforts of a Home!!!!!!! -

Marginalia

Inside front cover (p. i) and following recto page (p. iii) contain pencil outline sketches of figures/men

Editorial Notes

[1] Admiral Rodney’s Pillar, a monument raised on Breiddin Hill, just outside Welshpool, in 1782 to commemorate the naval victories of George Brydges Rodney in the American Wars of Independence.

[2] Salvator Rosa (1615-73), Italian painter, whose neo-classical depictions of landscape (along with those of Claude Lorrain and Nicholas Poussin) shaped the late eighteenth-century taste for the picturesque.

[3] Possibly misinterpreted from River Vyrnwy, which runs near, but not alongside, Llanfair Caereinion (actually located on the banks of the River Banwy).

[4] A reference to the ‘forward seat’ or ‘English hunting seat’, characterized by the rider’s forward position and shortened stirrups. See Donna Landry, Noble Brutes: How Eastern Horses Transformed English Culture (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

[5] The American artist Benjamin West (1738-1820) is famously said to have commented ‘My God, how like it is to a young Mohawk warrior!’ on first encountering the marble sculpture the Apollo Belvedere during a tour of Italy in 1760. See Julia A. Sienkewicz, ‘Beyond the Mohawk Warrior: Reinterpreting Benjamin West’s Evocations of American Indians’, 19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century, 9 (2009) https://www.19.bbk.ac.uk/articles/10.16995/ntn.515/

[6] Puffed or padded breeches, gathered at the knee.

[7] A reference to the novelist Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823), whose fictional ruined castles and abbeys become a key component of late eighteenth-century Gothic aesthetics. See, for example, The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne: A Highland Story (1789)

[8] Probably a reference to the falls now known as Rhaeadr Ddu (Black Falls), depicted in c.1830 by the Welsh artist Hugh Hughes (1790-1863) in this print: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rhaiadr_Du_-_near_Maentwrog.jpeg

[9] Bridge across the Aberglaslyn gorge near Beddgelert, Snowdonia, and a key feature in the landscape for visiting writers and painters in the period. See, for example, Mary Smirke (1779- 1853), ‘Pont Aberglasslyn’ (c.1810): https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pont_Aberglasslyn_(1132552).jpg)

[10] The gap left by Ker Porter in the manuscript, perhaps intended to be filled in later, refers to the thirteenth-century Welsh-built castle Dolbadarn, set on the shore of Llyn Padarn in Llanberis, at the foot of Snowdon.

[11] Part of the Holyhead-London road between Capel Curig and the north Wales coast, improved by Lord Penrhyn in the 1790s and by a turnpike trust in the early 1800s.

[12] A reference to Matthew Gregory Lewis’s 1796 novel, The Monk: A Romance, in which the character of Raymond narrowly escapes being murdered while briefly lodging at a woodcutter’s cottage on his travels.

[13] Henry Mountfardington, a character in The New Monk (1798), by ‘R.S.’ – a parody of Lewis’s The Monk.

[14] A reference to Thomas Gray’s ‘The Bard. A Pindaric Ode’ (1757): ‘On a rock, whose haughty brow / Frowns o’er old Conway’s foaming flood’. See the Thomas Gray Archive for the full text of the poem: http://www.thomasgray.org/cgi-bin/display.cgi?text=bapo

[15] Three-arched bridge dating from the early seventeenth century, though the connection to Inigo Jones is uncertain. See http://www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/24053/details/pont-fawrllanrwst-bridge

[16] A reference to Gwydir Castle, seat of the Wynn family. See DWB http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-WYNN-GWY-1300.html

[17] Lead mining commenced in the Llanrwst area in the early seventeenth century.

[18] For a contemporary illustration of these streets, known as ‘The Rows’, see Thomas Webster’s 1807 watercolour sketch: http://collections.britishart.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3656906

[19] Salt has been mined in Cheshire since Roman times.

[20] Part of the Peak District. Porter’s sketches from this tour are not known to have survived, however the undated watercolour ‘Rocks at Matlock’, next on Porter’s itinerary, is probably a product of it. See http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/porter-rocks-at-matlock-t09138

[21] Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned at Chatsworth for extended periods between 1569 and 1584, by its owner George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, who was appointed custodian of Mary by Elizabeth I.

[22] followed by a pen outline sketch of a figure from behind, with a long ?plait – titled ‘a couple of tail pieces –’

[23] [Pencil sketch of a seated woman brushing a shoe. The accompanying description reads, ‘Blue checked Handkerchief. Purple blue gown striped, do Petticoat – Black Hat’.] She may be ‘Miss Lloyd swan Hill Oswestry’, as noted at top of the page, or she may be the woman at Llanrwst described as ‘Kitty the maid of the inn’ and sketched at Underwood’s request (see f. 93).

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