Catherine Hutton’s Tour of Wales: 1800

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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This rather complicated manuscript history matters because tours are in and of themselves historical documents, and can bear witness to lives and landscapes which have changed for ever; there is a world of difference between 1800 and 1840, and even between 1796 and the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.

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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 23

Ruthin Aug 20th, 1800

My Dear Brother,

We are now on our fourth equestrian expedition into Wales, intending once more to shake hands with the mountains, and then take leave of them for ever.

How changed is the appearance of the country we have travelled through! Green has vanished from the face of the earth, and rests only on some of the trees whose roots draw nurture far beneath. The wet sands are reduced to powder, and a great part of them covers the neighbouring hedges. Last year the ground was under, or mixed with, water; this, it reflects everlasting sunshine. If it be true, as the old adage says,

Nothing pays so just a debt

As wet to dry, and dry to wet[1]

The proof of Mr Dry's punctuality may rest upon the present season. Now I am quoting proverbs, I will give you another: Too much of one thing is good for nothing. I do not mean to infer from this that the beautiful Vale of Llangollen is good for nothing. I only wish you to understand, that, having seen its beauties so often, we rather chose a worse landscape which we had not seen at all. Instead, therefore, of proceeding up the vale, as heretofore, we crossed the lower end of it, and climbing a steep hill, rode by the side of Sir Watkin's park, to Ruabon, a large and pleasant village. Three miles farther we came to Wrexham, the first town in North wales for size and population. The tower steeple of the church is very fine. The country around is beautiful and fertile, rich in corn and woods; and doubtless in verdure, when it is any where to be found. The mountains were left behind, to guard Llangollen Vale.

We took the road to Ruthin, and three miles beyond Wrexham, quitted the swelling hills and waving grain, for a barren common

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and a most execrable stoney road. ^ A new set of mountains now rose on our left, with mines of coal and iron, and works for refining the ore. The place is called Minera; I suppose from the mines. After three or four miles our road mended; ~~and~~ our scenery became more wild. ~~We were fairly among the mountains, and breathed the pure air which removed my fever~~ And I inhaled with pleasure the mountain breeze which restored to me to health last year. We travelled between two rows of mountains, along a narrow elevated vale, adorned, not with yellow wheat, like the rich slopes about Wrexham but with ~~here and there~~ a few scattered patches of green oats. When one ~~passes~~ ^ enters the barrier of the mountains the difference is immediate and astonishing.

At nine miles from Wrexham we quitted the Ruthin road, and toiled up a dreary hill, on the left, to a house where we meant to sleep. It is the Cross Foxes, but whoever seeks it by that token will seek in vain, for the Foxes, instead of giving intelligence at the door, are placed over the parlour chimney, and the house is generally known by the name of Tavarn Dowyrch [2]. It is in the parish of Llanarmon in Yale: but three miles distant from the church.

We entered the only parlour, which was dark and superlatively dirty. Nobody came to disturb us. I proceeded to the kitchen, where, in a corner, by a roasting fire, though the heat of the weather was insupportable, sat a female Falstaff, Mrs Davies, the governess of the mansion. Neither she nor her chair were moveables. From the spot where they were fixed, she might have laid her hands upon the fire; but she was defended from part of its heat by two old

pans, or pot-lids. This lady received me with all the state of a Duchess, and from her I learned that she had no meat, no porter, no oats,

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no straw. I asked if she had any beds? She answered she could make up eighteen. I sought no farther. The maid was baking thin cakes of flour on an iron plate. I desired to have some of them buttered; and with three successive pints of milk, two glasses of brandy, and some lump sugar, twice renewed, in an old broken tea-cup, we made a most delicious repast. I believe we should have committed an excess, and indulged ourselves with another pint, if we had dared; but when we sent our man out for the last, M^rs^ Davies asked him if he thought the river ran milk?

Bread, I thought, would be a good substitute for corn for our horses ^ as fern, she said, would be for straw and I asked if they could have a loaf? She answered in a very decisive and laconic manner, “No”. But, she observed, they would do very well without. I had not foreseen she had no bread; though that was actually the case, and our consumption of the cakes had caused a famine in the family.

As the dust in the kitchen was sometimes removed, and our habits brought up more from the parlour than they could have found on the turnpike road: as the kitchen was lighted by a blazing fire, while we did not know but a solitary candle might be esteemed a favour: and, as it was a trouble to get anything where the mistress could not move, and the maid could not understand: we sat an hour after supper with M^rs^ Davies.

The woman had been handsome, and did not want understanding, and her manner would have done honour to an Empress. She told us she had ^ been afflicted with the stone ^ during twenty nine years; that the pain had become intolerable; and about three years ago a gentleman from London slept at her house, to whom she mentioned her case. He promise

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ed to send her something which should cure her, and ~~she gave him~~ demanded half a crown ^ for his remedy, which she gave him. A packet of medicines arrived soon after, with directions for taking them. She doubled the dose, as she said she always did of everything that Doctors sent her. For five hours she was in such exquisite pain, that she thought her inside, and even her flesh, were being torn to pieces; and she bid her maid not to leave her, for she believed she should die. I suppose, if she had not been stronger than a horse, she must have died. But, at the end of that time, the stone came from her, broken into thirteen pieces, weighing, altogether, an ounce and a quarter. She was then easy and went to bed. Half a year later, a fragment of the stone, about the size of a pea, worked out at her loins. She has had no return of her complaint; but she was so weakened with the operation ^ of the medicine that she has never been able to move since, except twice, in the twenty four hours, between her bed and her kitchen fire. This has made her grow to such an enormous bulk. She does not sleep well, but in remembrance of her former suffering, she blesses God, as she lies awake, that the Queen of England is not happier than she: for she is free from pain.

Having listened to the extraordinary case of M^rs^ Davies, we desired her to make out our bill; which she did, with chalk, on the table before her; and retired. She and her family (a man and maid servant) supped on potatoes and buttermilk after we left them. My bed was the best of the eighteen, and had red and white checked curtains, half way round; an inferior stood in my room; four, still worse, in another room that I saw, and a miserable pallet, in a hole, at the top of the stairs. The other eleven remain unaccounted for to this hour.

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My dormitory was worthy of the other accommodations that I saw, at Tavern Dowyrch. A lumpy flock bed covered with a rug, no pillow, and the grease of twenty Welsh heads of hair marking the place where it should have lain. I got into it with reluctance. But either finding or fancying that I was damp, I stripped it of its dirty linen, and slept between the blankets; which, for the honour of the Welsh, I must say are always clean and were so in this, the dirtiest and poorest of their inns. That was more than I could say of myself, after passing through the dust of the preceeding day; but as only the maid was visible this morning, and I did not know what was Welsh for a towel, I carried my dirt away with me to Ruthin.

Letter 24

Caernarvon, Aug 28th 1800

My Dear Brother,

It is impossible in this country to steer clear of public meetings; we meant to have gone by Pool, but hearing it was the Assizes there, we went to Oswestry, where we found it was the wake. At Ruthin we met the Assizes, and at Abergeleu we came in for the fag end of the fair. The street was in an uproar, and Mr and Mrs Davies, at the Bee, were pushing drunken Welshmen out of their house, by the head and shoulders. In setting out from St Asaph, we took a wrong road, which brought us to Bodelwyddan, the seat of Sir John Williams. I took the liberty to ride up to the house, and enquire the way; and the servant was so civil as to walk by my horse, till he had conducted us into the high road. When I gave him something at parting, he said ‘God bless you’, which is the Welsh mode of saying, Thank-you Ma’am.

We arrived at the shore of the Conwy, just as the mail boat was putting

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off, and I begged the people to take us in. But every one to his business—theirs was to make haste—so they refused my petition. We waited near two hours for high water, and then crossed the river in the common ferry, in company with our own horses. We were forty three minutes on our passage, exposed to a violent storm and a rough sea: safe enough, I suppose, but I liked neither my situation nor my companions; the four footed ones, at least; for though I am fond of them on shore, I did not like to see them so near me on the water. I wrapped myself close in my greatcoat, however; sat on the floor, for the ferry affords no other seat; held down my head against the pelting wind and rain, and expressed none of my dislikes to my fellow travellers. The horses had the same discretion. They trembled, and said nothing, but I believe they were as glad as myself, when we set our feet on the shore of the town of Conwy.

We reached Aber while ^ we hoped light enough remained for us to walk to Rhaiader Vawr; and, that we might lose none of it, we set out immediately, without entering the inn. We marched up the deep, sequestered glen, the river still running at our feet; but no longer a foaming torrent. We met a traveller on horseback; for, as far as Pont Newyd, a horse road from Bangor to Llanrwst goes up the glen. His appearance announced that he could speak English. “How far to the water-fall?” “Three miles” we met another, and repeated our question. “A great way, I am sure you cannot see it tonight”. Though a little discouraged, and passed by Pont Newyd, which is now repaired. From thence, the road being still on the side of the mountain, and no longer intended for a horse, became so narrow that it required all my [~~xxx~~] strength of head to pass it. We soon came ^ near to a new wooden bridge; but the river was now so low, that we crossed it on huge stones, of which its bed is full. The mountains

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here recede so far as to leave a meadow, by the side of the river, considerably elevated above its banks. This might be very fertile, if the husbandman chose to scatter the manure over it, which at present adorns the cow-path. As it is, it is beautiful; and is enlivened by a cottage, and a score of black cattle. A flock of ten domestic goats we saw come down the mountain to be milked; and we observed that they stopped at the door of a shed used for that purpose, as mechanically as a horse would have done at the door of his stable.

We walked up this narrow vale, on a path so little worn by human footsteps, that, at times, it was scarcely discernible: till, as nearly as we could compute it, we were two miles and a half from the entrance, when the broad face of a mountain shut it up at the end, and seemed to say “Thus far shall ye go, and no further”. Down a hollow in this mountain falls the river; from the height, as we conjectured, of two hundred feet. There are two falls; the upper one sloping and short, the lower perpendicular, and occupying four fifths of the height. We saw it at the greatest disadvantage: at a time when large streams are diminished and small ones dried up: but even so it was majestic; not dashing and foaming, but falling in an even placid manner, down the smooth surface of the rock, itself had worn; and breaking and sprinkling over every inequality it had not been able to subdue.

I could have spent a day in this solitary glen, with such a magnificent object before ^ me and not known how the hours had passed; but day was almost gone, and I did not wish night to overtake me here. I therefore walked back with hasty strides, till I reached the wooden bridge, which, in a fit of heroism, I determined to cross, instead of going over on the stones below: but my short-lived bravery could scarcely carry me to the end, and had the river been bold and rapid, I must either have gone

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back or gone in. The bridge is what Pennant calls an Alpine bridge. Its construction is very simple. Two thin poles are laid across the river, the ends resting on piles of stones. Across these, at intervals, are nailed small narrow planks to step on; and a third pole, above the others, serves as a rail to hold by. I was glad when I quitted it; and glad that we reached the place where we crossed the river, in going up, while a glimpse of light remained; for, in the intermediate space, the path was so narrow I could hardly set two feet abreast, and was obliged to hold by the heath and furze of the mountain, to keep myself from falling.

The river comes down the glen with a rapid descent; consequently the upper part, though still a deep glen, is high ground. From thence, through the opening at bottom, we caught a beautiful view of the north east part of Anglesey. It was dark before we arrived at the inn at Aber; but we were both charmed with our expedition.

People must certainly die and marry among the mountains, as well as in the great world; but we have had two unexpected instances of it since last year. Richard Williams, the worthy boatman of Cwm y Glo, has exchanged his own [xxx] boat for that of Charon, and the Lakes of Llanberis for the river Styx, according to the creed of Grecian poets, and their imitators to the present day. And the sprightly old hostess of Llanberis, who had just English enough to bid us welcome, has become a widow and is married again.[3] Her second husband, who had been her former lover, [xxxx] hearing of her lonely situation, brought his horse and pillion, and bore her off, in triumph.

Roads perish as well as men! We saw that from Pont Aber Glaslyn to Tan y Bwlch at its last gasp. A new one has been opened since that time, which runs nearer the sea; where, [xxx] the larger rocks are lessened and the smaller are extinct. I am glad I saw the rough old gentleman, before his departure.

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We are very fortunate in having made the acquaintance of the son of an Irish nobleman; a soldier, open, bold, and brave: a man of good sense and great reading; and his wife, a sweet, amiable young woman. Their politeness is of no common kind. I have often met with persons, who, under the mask of obliging others, have sought only to please themselves: persons who, like Mr Smith in *Evelina* are for whatever the company chuses, but they like Vauxhall best: [4] but, though we are together every day, we cannot get this gentleman and lady to let us understand that they have a wish of their own.

Letter 25

Caernarvon Sept 2nd 1800

My Dear Brother,

I have made an excursion to Cl#nnog, a village ten miles south west from this place, lying between the mountains and the sea. A little beyond the third mile stone, the road divides; that on the left, having run nine miles farther, divides again, one branch of it leading to Criccieth; the other to Penmorfa (the Head of the Marsh); and from thence, across the traeths, into Merionethshire. We took the right hand road, which goes through Clynnog to Pwllheli. Till the division, our road had been stoney, and we had met carts innumerable conveying slates from the mountains. We here quitted slates and stones, and the road became as fine as I ever travelled; and so, I am told, it continues to Pwllheli.

We left the little rural church of Llanwnda on our right; and farther on, that of Llandwrog; no doubt under the patronage of the same kind St Twrog to whom is dedicated the church of Maentwrog, near Tan y Bwlch. On our left was the house of Glynllifon, the seat of Lord Newborough. The entrance [~~xxx~~] and the woods we saw, but the mansion kept so close among the trees, that it was with difficulty we could discern the smoak of its chimnies. The whole road is near the coast; never more than a mile from the sea, on one hand, or more than four from the mountains on the other. The country is a plain, made up

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of round hills, some of them sufficiently steep; but it is better cultivated and better wooded than any part of Caernarvonshire I have seen.

I could not help noticing, as we passed, the Welsh mode of getting in harvest.[5] In a field of wheat were the farmer, his wife and three children. They had three drags, each with one horse, and each horse mounted be a boy or girl. The woman laid nine sheaves upon a drag; the man raked, the children drove. When the woman had loaded a drag, she stood still, till another came. When the man had raked the ground occupied by the last nine sheaves, he stood still, till his wife had moved out of his way. The children always sat still, for they had nothing to do but hold a halter, and let the horse carry them. And so the whole family would go on, soberly; till by the blessing of God, and continuance of fine weather, they might in time, have carried all their wheat.

A few miles to the left, within the mountains, I had, before, seen a lazy fellow, in a hay field, loading two women alternately with hay. They carried it home, on their backs, while he rested on his fork, till each returned for another load.

The road from Glynllifon to Cl#nnog is remarkably straight. In returning we traced it the whole way to the woods of Glynllifon: a distance of nearly five miles. About two miles before we reach Cl#nnog, ^ we have a charming view of Snowdon, through the opening of Nant Nanlle and Drws y Coed. It is the vista from which Wilson took his view of that mountain [xxxx].[6] We saw the whole breadth of Snowdon, and it exactly filled the opening; but ^ a rising hill intercepted its base. This, also, is best seen in returning from Cl#nnog.

Cl#nnog is a lowly, retired village, with a tower steeple rising out of a grove of trees. It is not more than five or six hundred yards from the sea; though it is totally hidden from it. Cl#nnog is about three miles from the Rivals, the grand termination of the mountains: but not more than one from Gwern Coch,[7] the nearest. The chain seems here to prohibit human

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progress, and one would imagine that only birds or fishes could penetrate further; but I was told that the road to Pwllheli winds among the mountains, and after four miles, leaves them behind. From the shore the great three headed promontory of the Rivals is a most noble object.

We dined at the New Inn, which is the older of the two at Cl#nnog. Its mistress, the widow of a former curate of the parish, we found a very intelligent woman, and her moderate charge and [xxx] kindness, proclaimed her truly Welsh.[8]

We were conducted to the church of Cl#nnog by the clerk's wife, without [xxx] shoes or stockings. But she had a worse deficiency: she neither spoke nor understood one word of English, and vain were my enquiries after St Beuno, his chapel and his chest.[9] In this distress I sent our servant for Mrs Jones, our landlady; who shewed us, on the right side of the altar, the chest of St Beuno: a log of wood, made hollow within, and covered with a lid; with strong iron hinges, and a chink, to receive money.[10] The chest is secured by three locks, and is opened only once a year, when the contributions of the Pious, amounting to about thirty or forty shillings, are distributed among the poor. It was whispered that another motive, than piety, had sometimes a share in the donations – that if a young woman had committed a fault, for sixpence, the saint would kindly interpose, and prevent her becoming a mother, without being a wife.

An ancient vaulted passage was the communication between the church and the chapel of St Beuno. It may still be entered from the church, but the door next to the chapel is stopped up, and, to enter that, we are obliged to go round to its outer door. In this small cloister was formerly found the statue of Winifred, the celebrated saint of Flintshire, who was the niece of Beuno. It lies there still, and the discovery of whom it represents does great credit to the penetration of the discoverers, for it has neither head nor arms.

The chapel of St Beuno is large and lofty, and if the saint himself erec

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ted it for his mausoleum, he must have had at least as much vanity as devotion. His remains were deposited in the centre of the chapel, and worked miracles for ages. They healed the sick and, particularly, cured rickety children: but it must be owned, by the most rational method that ever saint invented. The patients were dipped in a well hard by; wrapped in blankets, and laid all night on the tomb. Instances of this have occurred within these very few years. But the sacrilegious Lord Newborough (whether he thought like the boy whose goose laid golden eggs, I know not) employed workmen to take down the tomb, and dig up the body.[11]The first they did effectually, for they broke up the tomb into a hundred pieces: luckily, they failed in their second purpose, for by the time they had dug about three feet

in depth, they were become so completely drunk that they were obliged to give up the enterprize; which was never resumed. The stones are piled carefully in a heap, and mark the place where the saint reposes; but he has been robbed of his heavenly diploma, and cures the sick no more.

The skill of St Beuno as a surgeon, was far more extraordinary than his practice of physic. It is well known that he took the head of his niece, Winifred, after it had been severed from her body, and placed it again on her shoulders; where it lived and flourished fifteen years, having no other mark of the injury it had sustained, than a small white circle around the neck.[12]

The well of St Beuno is inclosed by a quadrangular stone wall; but it has always been open up top. Within are two heights of benches, built all round in the walls, which narrow the masonry down to the well. These, I suppose, were for the convenience of the bathers; as four small recesses, at the back of the seats, were for their cloaths. The spring has been much injured by the alteration of the road to Pwllheli. The well is now not more than eighteen inches deep; but woe be to him that approaches it without caution; for it is surrounded by

offerings more likely to be acceptable to the heathen Goddess Cloacina,[13] than to a Christian Saint.

I thought of the maxim, Truth will prevail in the end. The church that Beuno erected for the worship of Almighty God is clean, and in perfect repair. The chapel he erected for the worship of himself is the receptacle of rubbish; and his well is marked by the filth of half the parish.

The Welsh had many Holy Wells, beside that of St Winifred, still so called; and the common people have great faith in them to this day. Another proof of my maxim, and of the good sense of the Welsh; who made their saints cure diseases by fine, clear, springs of cold water; while every other people ascribed that virtue to dry bones; the decayed remnants of the human body.

Letter 26

Caernarvon, Sept 12th 1800

My Dear Brother,

In another excursion I have been making to the Isle of Anglesey, I crossed the Menai at Bangor Ferry and began where I left off before. We turned to the right, along a narrow, rocky road, where it was just possible for our horses to follow us. This having taken us, some time, close to the water’s edge, led us up a steep rock high above it; from whence the views of the Menai and the country above it were charming. After we had gone about four miles, we came into the high road. Our descent into Beaumaris was one of the steepest I ever saw marked by wheels. At the bottom is the harbour. A row of houses, on the left, commands the whole bay; now a glassy surface enlivened by a number of vessels. Beyond this is the town, most beautifully situated; washed by the sea on one side, and sheltered by steep, wooded hills on the other; but in the principal street, which is

broad, straight, and not ill-built, shut out by the houses from both. It contains a good inn, and many good lodging houses, for the Irish, having made Caernarvon dear and saucy, are flocking to Beaumaris.

At the farther end of this street is the castle, separated from the sea by a lovely green, which is the public promenade of the town.[14] As the castle had no steep rock for security, it was surrounded by a deep ditch, which could occasionally be filled from the water. The castle of Beaumaris is reckoned less beautiful than those of Conwy and Caernarvon. Its towers are round, and not so lofty, and the elegant turrets are wanting; but it is more regular than either. It has a singular and massive appearance, and much would have been said of it, if the peerless castles of Conwy and Caernarvon had not been its neighbours. It is also less known. Nobody goes through Beaumaris, and few go to it.

The court of the castle, enlarged by some of the buildings having totally vanished, though still surrounded by others, is now a bowling green. I will not affirm that tall grass and weeds, through which one might with difficulty make one's way, might not be more appropriate: I can only say, that neatness, even as an attendant upon ruins, did not offend me.

Opposite the entrance is the state chamber, presenting a front of five regular windows. It has one gothic fire place in the middle, and one at each end. But we can only look up into it, the floor, having been of wood, is gone. Here

Princes sat, where nettles grow![15]

Here, for a short time, sat the unfortunate Richard the second. It is remarkable that of the four castles built in this country by his great great grandfather, three served him for an asylum, and one for a pri

son. He fled successively to Conwy, Beaumaris, Caernarvon, and Conwy again; and he was taken to Flint.

On the right is the chapel, the ribbed stone roof of which is entire, and deservedly admired. On each side the chapel, at a considerable height, is a window, communicating with a closet. Whether these were confessionals, or places where the principal inhabitants of the castle might join in the devotion, without mixing with the crowd, I am too ignorant to say. Underneath the chapel is a dungeon, which we went into. It is now no more than a vault, admitting light at the entrance; but in its perfect state, not a ray could penetrate. I shuddered at the thought! And pitied, while I blamed, those mistaken christians who could supplicated pardon for their sins from the God of mercy; whilst they obliged their fellow creatures to languish under their feet, deprived of the common benefits of light and air!

A gallery formerly ran all round the castle, with recesses for the soldiers, on one hand, and doors to the apartments on the other. We walked along the whole of one side the square, and part of two other sides. What more remains I know not. The gallery is narrow; some of the arched door-ways are too low even for me to pass through, without stooping; and it is lighted only by the chinks through which the soldiers reconnoitered the country, and discharged their arrows. There is a space all round the outside of the castle, bounded by a high stone wall.

From the castle of Beaumaris, we mounted Baron Hill, and walked through the beautiful woods of Lord Bulkeley, to the cist faen, or stone coffin of Joan, natural daughter of John, King of England, and wife of Llywelyn, Prince of Wales.[16] This princess came down from the Welsh camp on the mountains, and had the inexpressible pleasure of making peace between her father and her husband. What a glorious prerogative of woman is that of making peace! She died in 1237, and it is said Llywelyn built the monastery of Llanfaes over her grave. After

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the destruction of the abbey, the coffin became a watering trough for cattle, at a farmhouse. Lord Bulkeley has rescued it from this ignoble situation, and given it a place in his park; though he does not seem yet to have determined how to dispose of it, and in the meantime it lies neglected. I am afraid his lordship will never consult me on the subject; or I should counsel him to beg the coffin of Llywelyn from the church of Llanrwst, if possible; and if not, to present that of Joan to it; for it is a little singular that the coffin of the husband should have remained above ground, ever since the destruction of the Abbey of Maynan;[17] as that of the wife has done, since the destruction of Llanfaes. In their resurrection I would not divide them.

From the cist faen we ascended to the fort, a small castellated building, rising out of the woods, and mounting ten or a dozen peaceable little guns, whose only business is to announce days of rejoicing.[18] Notwithstanding my general contempt for modern antiques, this commanded my respect, from its situation. In Anglesey it looks down on the town and castle of Beaumaris, and the north east part of the island; beyond this ^ on the sea, Priestholm Island, the Straits of Menai, and the City of Bangor. The view is terminated by the chain of majestic mountains, which form the boundary of all the prospects of this country. I left this spot, where so much of the world was spread before me, with reluctance; but a more humble matter was become interesting – the dinner that waited for us at the inn.

We left Beaumaris by another road, to avoid the hill, going along a hollow way, and under the arch of an elegant bridge that Lord Bulkeley has thrown over it, to connect his lawns above. [xxxxxxx]. Here, as I sat silent on my horse, I had nothing to do but

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contemplate the mountains. Hitherto I had seen but in part, and known but in part; I now considered them as a grand whole.

The chain of mountains begins at the Great Orme's Head, and ends at the Rivals, about thirty eight or forty miles distant. These points, and one other between, which is Penmaen Mawr, touch the sea. But the general line of the mountains receeds inwards, leaving a space [xxxx] of what, in comparison [xxxxx] may be called level ground; but whoso travels it will find, to his cost, that it is a succession of steep, rocky hills. Perhaps it is nowhere more than five miles in breadth. This district is called Arfon, and Caernarvon, being seated in it, is no more than the city or castle of Arfon.

There are but three openings by which one can penetrate into the recesses of the mountains.

The first and grandest of these is Nant Francon [xxxxxxx]; the second of Llanberis [xxxx] the third is of Cwellyn Pool.[xxxxxx]

Each of the stupendous masses of earth and rock has a name; but I am acquainted with only the principal of them. [xxxxx] They rise in the following order:

The Great Ormes Head

Penmaen Mawr

Carnedd Llewelyn. Inferior only to Snowdon, being 3330 feet above high water mark; while Snowdon is but 3568 feet above the quay at Caernarvon.

Carnedd Dafydd. The twin brother of Carnedd Llewelyn.

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The Trefaen. A scalloped mountain, perhaps taking its name from that circumstance.

The two Glyders, Vawr and Bach

The two Lleders, Vawr and Bach

[xxxxx]

Snowdon

Moel Elian

[xxxx]

Mynydd Vawr

The Cader, or Chair. A long, flat, huge mountain.

Cilgwyn

Yr Eifl mountains; or, as we call them, The Rivals

At first my view was obstructed by clouds, but they travelled by degrees down the sides of the mountains, and lay on the vales, like whipped syllabub. Carnedd Llywelyn and Snowdon alone were capped, but their caps were like thin muslin, through which the shape of the head was seen. After we had crossed Bangor Ferry, The glimmering landscape faded on the sight,[19] and we rode to Caernarvon by the light of a charming moon. That I was fatigued, as usual, or more than usual, you will not wonder at, when you are told that my day's journey was thirty three miles; out of which I had walked full ten. A more extraordinary performance, as, at home, I have no pedestrian atcheivements to boast. But I was literally run away with, by old castles and cist faens.

Letter 27

Capel Cerig, Sept 18th 1800.

My Dear Brother,

We intended to have returned home by the new road to Tan y Bwlch, and from thence to Dolgelleu, a part of the country we had never seen; but a paper had been put into our hands at Beaumaris, containing a printed plan and description of a new and shorter road from Bangor to

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Capel Voelas, which would leave out Conwy and Llanrwst.[20] I had some fear of an unfinished road; and especially of one part of it which was said to climb a rock two hundred feet above a river and to be without a fence: but I was assured it was every where passable for horses. The names of Nant Ffrancon, Capel Cerig, Rhaiader y Wenol, and Pont y Pair, were music to my ears. I had been taught by Pennant to consider them as classic ground and ^ we determined to visit them.

Possibly you may wonder at the word I; and think that I should say we, if not he: knowing I have a companion whose wish ought to go before my own. If I were to speak in common terms, I should say, my ^ father's only wish is to oblige me. But he has no wish. It is an innate principle of his mind, which operates invariably, before he has time to form a wish. In return, I hope I have another innate principle, which would teach me, without reflection, to avoid every thing that might be really disagreeable to him.

We breakfasted in a circular room at the Penrhyn Arms, an inn erected by Lord Penrhyn, beyond Bangor. Perhaps the view from its windows may surpass that of any room in Great Britain.

The peasants of the eastern part of Anglesey call Nant Ffrancon, Cegin y Cythraul, the Kitchen of the Devil; for there, they say, he brews the storms. We had some reason to believe his cauldron was boiling now, as a terrible steam hovered over Nant Ffrancon. However that might prove, I rejoiced at the opportunity of seeing the old gentleman's kitchen; having hitherto only seen his cooks: but the mist dispersed and he put off his brewing, in our favour.

At Llandegai we turned to the right and entered the grand portal of the mountains. We rode along the cultivated side of a broad vale, with the river Ogwen roaring over its stoney bed at the bottom. The road was wide, and the carts, and even waggons, that were perpetually moving along it gave it the appearance of a turnpike road in England. At five miles from Llande

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gai we came to the slate quarries, where the vale contracts, but the dreary aspect of the mountains is animated by a multitude of little fanciful white cottages, built by Lord Penrhyn for his workmen. It were to be wished his Lordship had seen the cottages erected by Lord Scarsdale at Kedleston.[21] Local circumstances would have compelled him to substitute slates for their neat thatch; but their chaste simplicity might have served him for a model. Lord Penrhyn employs many hundred workmen in these quarries, and we were informed that he cleared last year £8,000 by their labours.*[1]

On a green bank above a river, stands an elegant cottage called Ogwen Bank, built by Lady Penrhyn, and surrounded by a flower garden; a thing utterly unknown before, in these desart wilds. Her ladyship frequently brings cold provisions, and dines in this retreat.[22]

Beyond the slate quarries carts are seen no more. ^ Even travellers disappear. The road and the country were our own. Here [xxxx] begins [xxxx] a vale of starved meadows, about three miles in length, and half a mile in breadth. The north west end, at which we entered, is open to the sea and the Isle of Anglesey; the upper end is closed by a wall of very high rocky ground, called the Benglog, and behind that the Trefaen, a lofty mountain, whose summit is a round, indented rock. Between these two is a horrid chasm called Cwm Idwal with a lake in its bottom. The boundary of Nant Ffrancon on the left, is the vast Carnedd Dafydd, the base of which fills the whole side. On the right we rode

over the foot of a mountain, rent and torn by some tremendous flood. Huge broken rocks lay on the right of the road; and, on the left, torrents of stones that had rolled over it..

The only exit from the upper end of Nant Ffrancon was, in Pennant's time, by a road up the Benglog, which he calls "the most dreadful horsepath in Wales".[23] The road now keeps ascending up the side of the mountain on the right, till it reaches the level of the Benglog, on which it crosses the head of the vale, and is by no means difficult. It then turns to the right, and burst upon Ogwen Pool.

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On the Benglog I saw the path which led to Cwm Idwal. It was such as I should not dare to climb.[24] The appearance of this black hollow is terrible. It must be surrounded by walls of rock; and that on the side of the Trefaen must be lofty and perpendicular. The river Idwal tumbles out of the lake, and joins the Ogwen below.

We conjectured Llyn Ogwen to be two hundred feet higher than the river, below the Benglog; about a mile and a half in length, including its curvature (for in one place it becomes narrow, and then opens again); and half a mile in breadth, in the widest part. It is skirted by mountains down to the water's edge; mountains which suffered no sensible diminution of their height, from the two hundred feet we had ascended. As the side of the stupendous Carnedd Dafydd had formed the left boundary of Nant Ffrancon, so its end formed the left boundary of the lake. [xxxxx]. Our road was cut in the rocks, under the Trefaen, on the margin of the water.

We travelled four or five miles along Nant y Benglog, the elevated valley which succeeds Ogwen Pool; first up a river that discharges itself into it, till it disappeared among the bogs; and then overtaking another, running in the opposite direction. The country was barren and the ground was peat. We had a most alarming proof of its unsoundness. In opening a gate, my father's horse slipped off the causeway on his hind legs, sunk up to his haunches; and could not extricate himself till his rider had jumped from his back.

This country, though dismal, is not absolutely uninhabitable. We saw, now and then, a cottage, with a small stack of hay, and numbers of black cattle were grazing in different spots on the sides of the mountains. Our vale terminated in the descent to Capel Cerig, situated in the lower vale of D#ffryn M#mbyr, which runs across it.[25] This descent was formerly a bwlch, but our road, which from Llandegai to Capel Cerig, a distance

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of fifteen miles, is a new one, made solely at the expence of Lord Penrhyn, wound down it with ease. Here we were charmed with the sight of wood.

The inn at Capel Cerig is lately erected by Lord Penrhyn, and is occupied by two of his former servants; happily for their business, English and Welsh. It smells a little of the embattled cottages, but one is thankful for good accommodations in so remote a place. Before it was built, sorry cwrw, milk, butter and oaten bread was all that money could purchase, at a hut called a public house, in Capel Cerig.

The chapel, from which the place takes its name (Chapel of the Rock) is said to be the oldest in Wales; it is certainly, one of the poorest, and would any where else be mistaken for a barn.[26] Lord Penrhyn means to build another; but I am pleased to hear he has so much reverence for antiquity, that he will not destroy this.

Lord Penrhyn is the Sir Watkin of the country. The domain of a great chieftan, formerly divided among his family, is again united in him, by his marriage to Lady Penrhyn.[27] We have trodden on no ground but his, from Bangor. And it extends two miles further up D#ffryn M#mbyr, where a small river divides it from the lands of Mr Smith. Lord Penrhyn is a proof of Pope's assertion, that

True self love, and social are the same [28]

He has made a port on the Menai, at the mouth of the Ogwen, to carry off the productions of his estate, and he is improving his possessions, and his country, at the same time by farming, fishing, mining, digging quarries, making roads, and every other method that wisdom can suggest, and wealth can execute.

Letter 28

Capel Cerig, Sept 19, 1800

My Dear Brother,

I have fancied Snowdonia a city not made with

[Map inserted here]

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hands, whose Builder and Maker is God.[29] I have bounded my fancied city by the district of Arvon; an imaginary line drawn from the Rivals to Pont Aber Glaslyn; the vale beginning at Pont Aber Glaslyn, and ending at Pont y Pair, and the Vale of Conwy, from Pont y Pair to the sea.

Arvon, in front of the city, and open to the Straits of Menai, I have called the Grand Parade. This, from Penmaen Mawr at one end, to the Rivals at the other, is thirty three miles in length.

Parallel with the Parade, and at the distance of from eight to twelve miles behind it, runs a street which divides the buildings ^ of Snowdonia from those of Merionethshire. This, from Pont Aber Glaslyn, at one extremity, to Pont y Pair at the other, is about twenty four miles in length. But, as a continuation of the same street in London is known by several names, of Ludgate Hill, Fleet Street and the Strand, so this is distinguished by the different appellations of Nant Gwynan, D#ffryn M#mbyr, and Glyn Llugwy. Nant, correctly speaking, signifies vale, and d#ffryn a wider, and glyn a narrower vale.

The interior of my city is crossed, at right angles, by three grand avenues, which communicate both with the Parade and the long street behind it. These are the passes of Cwellyn, Llanberis and Nant Ffrancon. The three cross streets are each so narrow. in one part, as to be wholly filled

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by a lake. These are the pools of Cwellyn, Llanberis and Ogwen. [~~xxxxx~~]

Snowdon, the magnificent temple of the city, touches three streets; the long one, at Nant Gwynan; and two of the cross ones, at Cwellyn pool, and the upper lake of Llanberis.

From the back of Llanberis the Almighty Architect seems to have judged it proper to strengthen his stupendous works. As if a vale of twenty four miles in length, bordered by such powerful neighbours, might stand in need of some support, he has run out a bulwark in the middle which connects both sides. This divides Nant Gwynan from D#ffryn M#mbyr, and from this the vales and waters descend opposite ways.

Besides these principal streets is the collateral one of Nant Nanlle, which commences, like the other cross streets, at Arfon but ends at the foot of Snowdon. There is also a [~~xxxx~~] street parallel with Nant Gwynan, and behind it, called the vale of Tan y Bwlch and Festiniog. The space between this and Nant Gwynan includes great mountains, such as Moel Siabod and the two Moel Wynns; but I do not think it properly belongs to Snowdonia.

Farther this deponent sayeth not. I believe here are no more grand divisions among the mountains, and whoso travels other roads must get over them.

[unnumbered half-page]

I have annexed a sketch of Snowdonia, from Evans's map,[30] which will explain my ideas better than all the words I could use.

For the first time in my life I had now turned the mountains.[31] At Capel Cerig I found myself in the long street which runs at the back of Snowdonia. To remain in the house was impossible. I planted myself on a small wooden bridge between the two upper and the lowest lakes of Capel Cerig. [~~xxxxx~~]. D#ffryn M#mbyr ^ ^{was} before ^ ^{me}, terminated by the mortify ^ ^{ing} outwork that shut me out of Nant Gwynan. On my right were the Glyders, the black chasm of Llanberis, and Snowdon; on my left rose the crooked mountain Moel Siabod. The summit of this last seems easy of access; and, if I could scale mountains, it should be my first. From its top a great part of the city I have been describing; a city beyond the work of mortal hands, and almost beyond the reach of human imagination, would strike the eye at once.

[*Verso of inserted half page*]

The scenery around me was beautiful, but unassuming, and formed a happy contrast to the sublimity of the more distant objects. The small lakes of Capel Cerig; a few green meadows intermingled with wood; the chapel and the inn; were all that hills and mountains left visible. My taste would have led me to consider the inn as an intruder in such a prospect, had I not reflected that without the comforts it afforded I could never have visited the spot. Pennant's view of Snowdon is taken from a rising ground, about a quarter of a mile below.[32]

If you will allow the trifling transition from Snowdon to a fungus. I shall conclude my account of Capel Cerig by informing you that I never saw so many mushrooms, or so fine ~~growing~~ as at this place, and that we carried the sauce to our chickens back with us to the inn.

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As our next stage, to Cernioge, was sixteen miles and a half, and as the first five, to Bettws y Coed (the Bead house of the Wood) was the part ^ of the road not yet completed, I determined to take a guide, not only to point out the way, but to shew us Rhaiader y Wenol, and Pont y Pair, and render us any service we might stand in need of. I requested the master of the house to provide one. “Yes Ma’am, I shall”. I repeatedly asked, “Have you spoken to the guide?” “No Ma’am, but you may depend upon him”. This morning came, and I found our innkeeper, who promises all things, and does as few as he can, had engaged no guide. An Englishman in the kitchen, who was walking our road, was extremely anxious to conduct us. Though he could walk much faster than we travelled, he would go our pace. I rejected his offer, for two reasons; the one I did not chuse to accept of services we were not to pay for; the other, that he was a stranger to the road, as well as ourselves. It is true he was sure he could find it, which we were not. Finding he could not fasten himself upon us, with all his rhetoric, he brandished his cudgel, and set off at a great rate.

At length our innkeeper has given us his hostler as our guide to Bettws. He knows no English; but he knows the country, and can open a gate, or lead a horse.

Letter 29

Shrewsbury, Sept 21st 1800

My Dear Brother,

On leaving the inn at Capel Cerig, we passed the humble chapel, interesting as a picture of the poverty and simplicity of ancient days. We then crossed the river Llugwy, which comes down from the mountains on the left, and having received the water of the Lake of Ca

pel Cerig, runs down to the Conwy, and gives its name to the glen through which it passes. Our road was old Welsh: a lane, between two hedges, just wide enough to admit a pair of wheels; though seldom called upon to do it; sometimes of shivery gravel, sometimes paved with huge stones; and, not unfrequently, native rock. But the scenery was inexpressibly grand. The river hemmed in by lofty mountains, and rolling among gigantic rocks; its banks, not watery meadows, but the cultivated base of mountains, besprinkled with wood, and animated with scattered dwellings. How charming after the houseless, leafless, Nant y Benglog and D#ffryn M#mbyr!

About a mile brought us to a narrow pass, where the river and the road fill the vale. Even they have some difficulty to get along; for enormous rocks endeavour to stop the water, and the road lies on its brink. At the end of this pass stands the rock of two hundred feet. Future travellers will avoid it, as a bridge is already built, and the road is to run along a meadow on the opposite side. We had to get over it; but as I always chuse to walk over rocks that are two hundred feet above rivers, I was not terrified. It is said a gig and a curricle have once passed this way; it may be possible, the horses running tandem. But I think they would not persuade other gigs and curricles to follow.

After we had descended our rock, the river assumed a more placid form. At two miles from Capel Cerig, we forded it, and going up a steep hill, were proceeding towards Dolwyddelan, when our guide opened a gate on the left, and we turned suddenly back to the water’s edge, and travelled more than a mile on the new road.

Our landscapes yesterday were magnificent, but savage: to-day they were more beautiful and picturesque. We had now a narrow vale

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with limits less grand, but we had verdant fields ^ and varied woods, with rocks starting up, sometimes as big as a house.

Goats have not been frequently seen in our journeying in Wales. In Glyn Llugwy we met one family – the father and mother chained together with a cord of rushes – No bad emblem of matrimony – Though I believe the restraint in the present instance, was not so much intended to prevent their running away from each other, as their running away together. Their offspring needed no other tie than filial affection.[33]

At three miles from Capel Cerig the sound of falling water gave notice that we were in the neighbourhood of Rhaiader y Wenol; and our guide taking us down to a field, to the river side, I could several views of this celebrated waterfall. I saw it rushing down stupendous clefts of solid rock, and dashing round immense stones; every where adorned with wood; though, in many places, it was difficult to conceive how wood could grow: but, to have seen it in perfection, I should have been at the bottom; a descent to which neither my strength nor my nerves was equal.

When our new road deserted us, we ascended a hill, covered with wood, almost intirely birch. From the top of this, a steep descent of nearly a mile, and a causeway on the river's brink, of half a mile, brought us to Bettws y Coed; one of the few Coeds that still deserve the name; for it is still surrounded by wood. Moel Siabod terminated the view behind us all the way, soaring above every winding of the vale, and even at Bettws, seeming near.

At Bettws is Pont y Pair, a bridge of five arches, thrown from rock to rock over the Llugwy; and every pier, if I right -ly remember is the native rock of the torrent. It is reckoned one of the wonders of Wales. [xxxxx] It appeared to me romantic, but not so striking as Pont Aber Glaslyn, at the other

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end of these continued vales; or even as Pont y Glyn. Here, the mountains round off to the right and left, and the river and glen of the Llugwy end in those of the Conwy, which run across. We were now only three miles above Llanrwst. The road over Pont y Pair on the left, leads to that place. The character of Nant Conwy changes here. From hence to the spot where it finishes in the ocean, it presents all the comforts of civil life; society, that greatest of all, included. From hence till it ends in the moorish mountains where the river has its source, it is wild and solitary.

Arrived at the banks of the Conwy, from whence we had been told the road was open for carriages, and there was no losing our way, we dismissed our guide. The man had been very serviceable, and very civil; for civility needs not words to make itself understood: the best desire to oblige is shewn by actions. Our gratitude at parting was also displayed in a manner too unequivocal to be mistaken.

We turned to the right up the Conwy; our road being on the ^ brink of its waters, and from three to ten feet above them. At about a mile and a half we came to Pont yr Lleder , a bridge over the river Lleder, which comes down through an opening in the mountains on the right, and joins the Conwy. The Conwy had been, till now, a sullen, silent stream; I dare say, very deep. Just before Pont yr Lleder, we lost it, behind some rocks; and moment after, saw a great chasm, down which it poured. We began a steep ascent, which soon became a precipice, high above the rover; and never shall I forget, though I can ill describe, the scenes which then presented themselves to my view! I was come, without

expecting it, to the celebrated falls of the Conwy! I had heard, in a confused manner, at Llanrwst, of grand falls, up the river, and of adventurous knights, and fortunate la-

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dies, who had visited them from thence; but I never hoped to see them myself, and still less imagined they lay in my way.

Our steep ascent continued more than a mile, the river ascending with us, though always far below. The glen was no more than its bed; for our road was cut in rocks that were immediately above it; and rocks rose on the other side, inaccessible even to a mountain goat. The road was good, and wide enough for a carriage; though, as it is without a fence towards the precipice, I should shudder to see a carriage roll along it. I saw no regular water-fall; but a succession of broken falls, for more than a mile. A river rushing down a tremendous fissure in the rocks, torn and split into a thousand pieces, by opposing masses of singular shapes, and foaming, and struggling, and fight^ ing its way to the bottom!

Having gained the summit of the rock, we came to a rustic mill, from whence we saw the convulsions of the Conwy, in all their grandeur. Had we pursued the same road, we should still have gone up the river, and about two miles farther should have reached Penmachno; and leaving Llyn Conway among moorish and barren mountains on the left, in nine or ten miles more, it would have carried us to Festiniog. But, about three miles from Bettws y Coed, we turned suddenly to the left, crossed the Conwy at Pont Rhyd Llanfair; quitted Caernarvonshire, and its magnificent scenery, and exchanged lofty mountains, rapid rivers, and romantic glens, for an insipid sameness, bleak hills, and a bad road.

Five miles and a half of wearisome hills, and sterile commons, brought us into the high way from Shrewsbury and London to Holyhead, a mile short of Capel Voelas, and three of Cernioge. Twice

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had I passed these dreary heights before, in my way from Cernioge to Llanrwst, and both times in heavy rain. I had always an idea that, if the clouds had not interposed, I should have seen the towering mountains of Snowdonia: but I had no conception they were so near, or afforded so glorious a sight. I now beheld them, piled one upon another, in all their various forms [xxxx] Snowdon alone was capped. I cannot express to you my feelings, while my eyes rested on them, as long as a glimpse remained; believing, as I still believe, that I shall see them no more!

Such is the road from Llandegai to Capel Voelas; and such the road that is to supercede the present route of the mailcoach from London to Holyhead.[34] When I first heard of it, I longed to see the sublime mountain scenes it would unfold; but I believed it would be impracticable in bad weather; and that storms, in the defiles of such mountains, would even overset a coach.

In this opinion I was confirmed by the people of the towns of Llanrwst and Conwy, whose towns it will almost annihilate; but I no longer apprehend this danger at any time. The paper given us at Beaumaris was fabricated by persons interested in the success of the new road, and somewhat shortened the distance. In those parts stated to be already open for carriages, carriages may, indeed, pass; but one contingency is frequently forgotten to be provided for – how they may pass one another. Much remains to be done, before it can be made a post road; but it stands in no need of misrepresentation to recommend it; and will certainly be, one day, the high road through North Wales.*[2] Other branches are proposed to be made from it which will disclose the now hidden beauties of Nant Beris and Nant Gwynan.

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Between Llangollen and Chirk, our English-man of Capel ^ Cerig , who was so desirous of shewing us the way to Cernioge, passed us on the roof of the stage coach. Hey! called out my father [xxxx]. I thought you were to have been far before us! Aye, cried he, but I turned to the left, and got to Llanrwst.

Three miles short of Oswestry, we took the road to the village of Whittington. We enquired at the turnpike of there was any inn there, likely to accommodate us and our horses. The woman said "Yes, there's two, and they both sell every thing, but that by the church is best". I asked what was the sign? She hesitated a moment and then called out, "Sall, what is the sign of the Boot Inn?", but recollecting herself, "Oh dear", said she. "I believe it's the Boot." With this information we proceeded and found Whittington a very pleasant village, ornamented with fine trees, and that the Boot actually sold everything – we wanted.

At Whittington are some round towers remaining of an old castle, and a manor house adjoining, of the days of Queen Elizabeth.[35] The place appeared to me so likely to be the resort of spectres, that I could not forbear asking the woman who shewed it, if it were not haunted. She assured me, with great earnestness, that it was; and told several stories to confirm it. She said one old woman lived in it, but she did not care for spirits. I wondered the creators of the ghosts had not dubbed this ^ singular old woman a witch.

Our mode of travelling places us in rather equivocal light at inns. Without the sound of wheels to announce us, and often without even the trampling of horses' feet (for we frequently chuse to walk through a paved town) we come in such a questionable shape that they will not speak to us.[36] An instance of this has occurred at the place where we now are at Shrewsbury which was recommended to us as a comfortable second rate inn. We

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entered the house. No one came. We advanced to the bar, where the mistress was sitting, and asked her if we could have a room with a fire, supper, and beds. She surveyed us from head to foot. "Why yes, said she, you may have a room and I will order a fire in it". I told her my cloaths were wet. She gave me permission to stand by her bar fire, till the other was ready, and then left us to our own reflections, which were not much in her favour. We saw fire carried along the passage; and, having allowed it a reasonable time to burn, we followed it; but it was as cold as its mistress; a few great black pieces of coal, that disdained to burn. I rang the bell and told the girl who entered that if we gave too much trouble, we would remove to the Lion, where we had been accustomed to go. She then bustled about got us a cheerful fire, and brought in a couple of candles. This lighted up my good humour: but a moment after, she came in again, took up one of the candles, hunted round the room for something she could not find; and at last, fairly marched off with it. I rang the bell a second time. "Young woman", said I "you are an excellent servant. No girl could have better obeyed her mistress's orders, or taken our candle with more dexterity. If your mistress has any occasion for the other, I beg you will take that too, for we asked only for fire." Whether this reproof had its effect; or whether they perceived, by this time, that our man's livery and laced hat were of the party, and that our horses were at supper in the stable, I know not; but the master brought in our first ^ dish and behaved with a degree of civility that would have recommended his house to us; if it had been exercised a little earlier.

Before I take my leave of travelling in Wales, I will observe, that the more I ^ have seen of the country, the more I ^ have had to admire; and that

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no tourist, except Pennant, has seen Wales.[37] To travel post in Wales is to fly. The life of a post horse is every where miserable, here, if I may be allowed the expression, it is certain death. The mistress of the inn at Llangollen who had seen our horses one, [xxx] three and four years before, looked at them and shook her head. “Ah!” said she, you can keep your horses, and make them look well! No horse lasts me above a year and half!” Along the whole road from Shrewsbury to Holyhead, the horses are knocked up. The innkeepers lament it - but in consideration of their own loss - no idea of the sufferings of the poor animals ever enters their minds.

This hurry has been occasioned by the perpetual intercourse between the two kingdoms, during the troubles in Ireland. Men have gone upon business, and must make haste. Others have followed and would make haste. Irishmen have curst the post boys; and, presenting their pistols, have bade them drive to the devil; and threatened to shoot them if they dared to disobey. To this fury of expedition the example of the mail coach has contributed. It is obliged, by profession, to fly; and all post boys endeavour to fly after it. The horses are allowed to pull up steep hills, but they gallop up common ones, and down all. When they return empty, they are made to gallop; whether they deserve it or no, they are flogged; and at the end of their journey, there commonly stands some little dirty boy, to whip them into the stable.

Travellers at this rate cannot see Wales.

But a great number of persons of fortune, of both sexes, travel through Wales, on purpose to see its beauties. These have their own carriages and frequently their own horses. They enter North Wales at Chirk. They pass through Llangollen, Corwen, Llanrwst and Conwy; and take a dinner at Bangor Ferry in their way to Caernarvon. From Caernarvon they make an excursion to the Lakes of Llanberis; and, perhaps, to Snowdonia.

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They then proceed to Beddgelert and Tan y Bwlch, and, by the nearest way, home; and having done all this, they have seen Wales. So they have; the grand outline; and enough to wonder at, and admire. But to find out all its beauties, a man must travel on foot; or at least on a Welsh Keffil. He must be acquainted with the Welsh gentry and clergy, and travel with a pass from one of their houses to another. So might he learn what was worth seeing, and where to find it.

Editorial Notes

[1] A letter to the *Farmers’ Magazine* written in August 1879 quotes a version of this: ‘There’s ne’er so justly paid a debt/ As wet to dry, and dry to wet’ (Vol 56, Series 3, p. 213).

[2] Tafarn Dywyrch, ‘the turf tavern’ would also be visited by George Borrow, in 1854 (*Wild Wales*, Chapter XV).

[3] John Closs of T#’n Llan, Nant Peris (now the Vaynol Arms) died in 1799; his first wife Jane Roberts apparently died in 1773; this must be Elin Griffith, whom he married in 1780. See Margaret Wyn Roberts, 'Cofeb Griffith Ellis'.

[4] ‘Mr Smith’ is a minor character in Frances Burney’s, *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778).

[5] On this theme, of perennial interest to tourists who often travelled in late summer, see the examples noted by Michael Freeman here.

[6] Richard Wilson, ‘Snowdon from Llyn Nantlle’, Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool; see here.

[7] Gyrn Goch and Gyrn Ddu are hills on the Ll#n Peninsula just south of Clynnog Fawr.

[8] She appears (later in the text) to be a Mrs Jones.

[9] Beuno, thought to have died in the mid-seventh century, was widely revered as a saint across north Wales. A C14th Welsh-language Life, Buchedd Beuno, recounts a range of events and miracles which correspond to sites of his cult; he also appears in the Life of his niece St Gwenfrewi or Winefrede of Holywell, near Thomas Pennant’s home at Downing. See Patrick Sims-Williams, *Buchedd Beuno: The Middle Welsh Life of St Beuno* (Dublin: Dias Texts, 2018) and ODNB.

[10] At Clynnog both the chapel and the distinctive ash chest (‘Cyff Beuno’) mentioned by Hutton survive: for a mid-nineteenth-century watercolour of the latter see Frances Wynne (1835-1907) ‘Scraps ancient and modern’National Library of Wales Drawing Volume DV 307.

[11] Thomas Wynn of Glynllifon (1736-1807) decided to excavate the site in 1793; several later tourists note this, such as Richard Ayton and William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of the year 1813*, 8 vols (London: Longman, 1814-25) I, 179. I have yet to find it noted in an archaeological report.

[12] The legend of the decapitation and miraculous recovery of St Winifred, niece of St Beuno, became widely known to tourists through Pennant’s *Tour in Wales*, I, 31-34.

[13] A delicate way of putting it: Cloacina was the Roman goddess of sewers.

[14] For an image of Beaumaris Castle by Moses Griffith, see here.

[15] [Anon] *A journey to the Highlands of Scotland. With occasional remarks on Dr. Johnson's tour: by a lady* (1776) contains a poem ‘by a gentleman’ on ‘Rosline Castle’. ‘Where bats now rest their smutty wings / Th’impurpled feast was wont to flow / And Beauty danced in graceful rings / And princes sat, where nettles grow. (p. 75)

[16] The carved lid of the stone coffin, with its effigy thought to be Joan, was kept in the church of St Mary and St Nicholas and reunited with the ‘cattle trough’ on the suggestion of the poet Richard Llwyd; Lord Bulkeley built a mausoleum for it in his grounds in 1808. The coffin was moved to the church in Beaumaris in the 1920s. See Ramage, *Portraits of an Island*, 7-8. For a photograph of the carved lid, see here.

[17] Llywelyn’s coffin was moved to Maenan Abbey near Llanrwst after the Dissolution; it can now be seen in the church at Llanrwst.

[18] One of several follies and buildings in the grounds, this tower does not seem to have survived.

[19] From the second stanza of Thomas Gray’s ‘Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard’ (1751): see here.

[20] For the new road and the coaching inn at Capel Curig, built by Lord Penrhyn (1737-1808), see accounts collected by Michael Freeman, here.

[21] Nathaniel Curzon, Lord Scarsdale inherited the estate at Kedleston and built a new house and developed the grounds in 1759, relocating the public highway and the entire village in the process.

[22] This paragraph has been inserted on a separate page. For Lady Penrhyn’s ferme ornée see Bettina Harden, *The Most Glorious Prospect: Garden Visiting in Wales 1639-1900* (Graffeg: Llangennech) 140-43.

[23] ‘The way from that place into the valley, or rather chasm, of Nant Frankon, is called The Ben-Glog, the most dreadful horsepath in Wales, worked in the rudest manner, into steps, for a great length’. *Tour in Wales*, II, (1784) 161.

[24] For the pioneering climb of this chasm and the surrounding peaks by Peter Bailey Williams and William Bingley see Simon Bainbridge, *Mountaineering and British Romanticism: The Literary Cultures of Climbing 1770-1836* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020) 59-63.

[25] For an evocative print of this landscape see: here.

[26] This is now known as the church of St Julitta. See here.

[27] Richard Pennant inherited property through his marriage to Ann Susanna Warburton (1745-1816); his father John Pennant, a Liverpool merchant, had been General Hugh Warburton's business partner.

[28] Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man* (1733): 'That reason, passion, answer one great aim / That true self-love and social are the same / Self-love forsook the path it once pursu'd / And found the private in the public good.'

[29] 'an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens' (*2 Corinthians* 5:1); Hutton's map is reproduced here.

[30] For John Evans' maps of north Wales, see here.

[31] Not clear: possibly 'toured'?

[32] Peter Bishop discusses Moses Griffith's picture 'The Summit of Snowdon from Capel Cerig' from Pennant's *Journey to Snowdon* (1781), as an early example of a much-painted view: see here.

[33] For tourists' interest in the iconic Welsh mountain goats see Michael Freeman, here.

[34] On Lord Penrhyn's road from Llandegai through the mountains see Richard Moore-Colyer, *Roads and Trackways of Wales* (2nd ed. Ashbourne: Landmark, 2001) 154-60.

[35] For a lovely image of the castle by Moses Griffith, see here.

[36] Hamlet to the ghost of his father: 'Thou comest in such a questionable shape / That I will speak to thee'. *Hamlet*, Act 1, iv. On some innkeepers' lack of enthusiasm for pedestrian customers see Michael Freeman here.

[37] Much of this final section (with its interesting overlap between tourist and military routes in the years of the Irish Rebellion) appears in a letter written in December 1799 to Hutton's close friend Mrs André. The letter finishes a little less graciously: 'The common people do not understand English, and they know nothing'. Catherine Hutton Beale, *Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman of the Last Century: Letters of Catherine Hutton* (Birmingham, 1891) 131-32.

Authorial Notes

[1] *I have since been told that in 1805 Lord Penrhyn cleared £20,000.

[2] [----------line in darker ink, and then inserted:] The mail coach to Holyhead travelled this way, for the first time, Sept 1808