John Lloyd, Caerwys, to [Thomas Pennant], c.1777

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D^{r} Sir

All that this Volume contains relative to Owen Glyndwr, is a kind of a Welsh Indendture (as it is call^{d}) or rather a Compact enter,^{d} into voluntarily by several districts therein mentioned in order to make some ^kind of reparation to individuals, for damages suffer,^{d} before & after the war. – It seems to consist of two parts, but the language is so very bad that in many parts it is not intelligible. – I will endeavour to extract the most material & intelligible articles. The first part begins thus. ——— "This Indenture was made by Llan Ondras, Gwarth-Rymmon, Mortyn[1] & the three Commots of Deuddwr, near Pont Gammarch, six years after Owen's wars" The purport of which is: "That every one had a Right to his demands from the other before & after the war, but not during the war; & that every one should have his lands restored without lawsuit[…]; whoever refused, not only forfeited the Benefit of the Compact, but the goods so retained &c should be deemed as Thefts, & he deprived from the power of selling them, & if his Lord sold them, he was fined ten pounds, & the goods or their value to the owners. If the refractory person was Hanged or died a natural death, the clain lay good against his wife, Heirs […]or Executors &c. But if she or they denied the demand, the plaintiff must procure his Compurgators, viz Six persons to swear with him to the right of his claim &c ^The defendant had a right to object to one of the Six, and another must be provided &c" By the Fragment left of the next clause it seems that the dead […]Defendant had a right to his Compurgators. ——— After this there follow several laws for the quieting & good government of the Country in general, such as those relative to waives & Estrays, vagrants &c & those relative to ^Bail & the recovery of Debts, of manslaughter &c of Thefts, the Duty of officers &c. – This Indenture or rather Code concludes with the Valuation of the Several goods & chattels for which Satisfaction was to be made. – A Horse ^or mare upon the oath of the Owner & two neighbours might be valued at 0$^{£}$: 10^{S}- 0^{D}. A foal at 20 pence an ox at a mark, a Cow at twelve ^ten Shillings &c &c The Hire of the Ox and the milk of the Cow are also valued &c – An ewe at 16^{D}, her wool at at 4^{D}, her milk at 2^{d}, her Lamb at 8^{D}. &c- […]&c

A two handed sword upon the oath of the Owner might be valued at 10^{S} a one Handed Sword at 6^{S}: 8^{D}, a steel Buckler, 2^{S}: 8^{D}: A Bow 16^{D} an arrow 6^{d}

It is further ordained, that for all goods, upon which no set value is fixed, such as Cloth, Fustian, Cloathes, Brass, Copper, Flesh, chesese, meal &c their value is to be assertained by the Oath of the Owner

It may be observed that this seems to be a good Code of Laws voluntarily enacted by the men ^of the above districts, at that Critical Time; They certainly wanted the Sa[…]nction of Legal authority, & there is no penalty annexed for the Breach of them, But the Forfeiting of the Benefit of the Compact, excepting in one case, where the delinquent is to be fettered with Iron & cast into Prison, and if his keeper shews him any Favour, he is to make good his delinquency & both loose the Benefit of the Compact. This relates to some Judgements confessed before the making of this Compact, & as the passage stands in this manuscript, is totally unintelligible. – I must further observe that ^this is a Transcript from ^some ancient M:S: that was not entire; which is the reason of it's being s[…]o imperfect. – Most of the Districts mentioned, I believe, are in Montgomeryshire . . . . . – ———

The [...]other Part is a general Compact entered into by the Several parts of the three Principalities. It sets forth to the Following Purport. “Here is a memorandum of the first Compact made, after the Time of Owen ap Gryffydd; Between Gwyned. (N: wales) and Powys, at Bwlch Oerddyrws; Between Southwales & Powys, at Eisteddfa Guric; Between Powys, Elvel, & Buell, Gwarth-rymmon & the Commot of Deuddwr, at Aber Diwlas; Between Powys & Melionydd, at a place call,[d] Rhuddwr.” This likewise allows the right of of all demands before & after the wars of Owen ap Gryff: (a#s Glyndwr) excepting, during the war, and proceeds to a Regular Method of Recovering them &c Here in some cases imprisonment & the Stocks take place. Both in this and the preceding, Officers are punish,[d] for neglect of Duty &c Here like ^wise the Highest value that the Owner of any cattle &c was allow, [d] to Swear to is fix[d]; But differs ^very a little from the former. ~~the prices being generally Higher in that, but the difference is very Trifling~~ &c All these causes &c were to be tried & Settled in the Courts of the Lords of the Several districts.. –

As Justice & ^the good Regulation of the Country seems to be the only Object of these Compacts, I cant help commending our ancestors highly upon that score, especially if they adhered to the observation of them. They seem to be the associations of all the great men of the Principality, in order to enforce the observation of Justice, by their Own weight & power, without any other Legal Sanction, & to have arose from those merciless laws enacted against them by Henry 4th, where Justice itself (as Powel observes) was meer injury & cruelty. – I suppose they were subsequent to those laws, as the first of these Compacts is mentioned to be made Six years after Owen’s wars; The last as it comprehends the whole Principality, probably arose, from the observation of the utility of the Former in these few districts which entered into it. – – You may probably think it worth your while to dress up a Handsome paragraph upon this Subject, which will do very well to be inserted after the close of Owen’s life &c[2]

Editorial Notes

[1] This refers to either Morton, Oswesty, or Morton, Denbighshire. See Patrik Sims-Williams, 'Y Copi Cynharaf o'r Cydfodau ar ôl Rhyfel Owain Glynd#r', in *Penrhaith ein heniaith ni: Cyfrol Deyrnged Gruffydd Aled Williams*, ed. T. Robin Chapman and Bleddyn Owen Hughes (Aberystwyth: Atebol, 2023), pp. 69-82, especially pp. 70, 80 n. 5 [reading amended and note added 2 July 2024].

[2] Pennant disregarded John Lloyd's advice on the location of this material, including it instead in *A tour in Wales 1770 [1773]* (1778), II, pp. 85–6, following a section on Bwlch yr Oerddrws, which he says ‘is noted for being one of the three places, in which were assembled, six years after the wars of *Glyndwr*, all the great men of certain districts, in order to enforce the observation of justice by their own weight, without any other legal sanction’.