John Lloyd, Caerwys, to Thomas Pennant, 21 August 1780

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Caerwys August 21: 1780 –

“Cyndhelw cadw ditheu y rhiw

Arr a dh#l yma hedhiw

Cudeb am #n mab nyd gwiw +

Lhowarch H#n yn y maes yn R^hiwedog, gwedi trigo ei holl Bheibion onyd Cyndd^helw
Vid: *J: D: Rhys’s Grammar*. p. 103
Lhowarch Hen in the field of Battle at Rhiwedog, when all his sons were perished except cyndhelw.[1]

I don’t think that there is any mention of this Battle of Rhiwedog ain any other place, besides this poem of Lhowarch Hen, who lived Circa ann: 590. Here it seems he lost this last son, Cyndhelw. – ~~Lho~~Pabell Lhowarch H#n, of the remains of which M^r^ Pennant has a drawing,[2] stood in a field a little this side Llanvawr Church, Call’d now Cae’r Babell or Tent field, where probably he rested the night after the Battle, & finished his Elegy; At the Conclusion of which, he pathetically laments his being bereft of all his children. – Rhiwedog a#s Rhiwaedog is undoubtedly denominated from this Battle.

From the word Rhiw, the side or Brow of ^a hill, & gwaedog Bloody. – This Rhiw, Cyndhelw is charged to defend &c

“Meiric Vychan, ap Ynyr Vychan”, the Heroe effigiated in Dolgelleu church,[3] was undoubtedly of the House of Nanney, being the 4th in Descent from prince Cadwgan, who resided there, & whose posterity have Continued in possession of it to this day. – His ascent runs thus. “Meiric Vychan ap Ynyr Vychan, ab Ynyr ab Meuric ab Mad: ab Cadwgan ab Bledyn ab Kyvyn Tuysauc Powys” vid Bodyscallan M:S: wrote by S^r^ John Powys &c

I mentioned to you that this Heroe was an ancestor of mine, & that I was not descended from Owen ap Cadwgan, My ascent to the latter runs thus. John ab John, ab Richard, ab Edward, ab Humphrey, ab Edward, ab Davydh, ab Robert, ab Howel, ab Davydh, ab Meirig Llwyd o Nannau, ab Meirig Vychan ab Ynyr Vychan, ab Ynyr, ab Meuric, ab Madog, ab Cadwgan, ab Bleddyn ab Cynvyn. &c &c[4]

By the above, which is very authentic, you see that my descent is from Madog ab Cadwgan & not from Owen, who I believe has no posterity at present; this I mention to prevent your Committing a Mistake, as you have entered a note which may mislead you, Relative to Owen ab Cadwgan &c [illegible] I have some Business that obliges me to go to Chester on Thursday, if you have any commands, let me know. My best Respects to all the Family.

your most obedient Servt &c

John Lloyd

Thomas Pennant Esq[r]

Downing

Marginalia

On address side, in John Lloyd's hand:

+ Cynddelw defend the Hill, ~~let the event~~
let the event of the day be what it will
when there is only one son left, it is bootless to be over fond of him

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Editorial Notes

[1] The stanza and accompanying note which open this letter are given, as signalled, in John David Rhys's *Grammar*. The stanza is a corrupt form of an englyn from the ninth- or tenth-century 'Canu Heledd'. See Ifor Williams (ed.), *Canu Llywarch Hen* (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1935), pp. 35, 200. For Lloyd's translation, see under *Marginalia*.

[2] This is not included in Pennant's extra-illustrated copies of *A tour in Wales* at NLW, and has not been identified elsewhere, either.

[3] Pennant refers to Meurig Fychan and his effigy at Dolgellau church in *A tour in Wales 1770 [1773]* (1778), II, p. 87. For a drawing of the monument, see Pennant's extra-illustrated copy of *A tour in Wales* at NLW, here, p. 96.

[4] See *A tour in Wales 1770 [1773]* (1778), II, p. 115, where Pennant records the descent of Mr. Evan Llwyd and John Lloyd, 'who, being brother's children, are eighteenth in descent from *Blyddyn ap Cynvyn*', and delights in the fact that 'it is a genuine copy of the form of a *British* pedegree'.