

11. Ieuan Deulwyn

In southern Ceredigion, there is one poem of praise by Ieuan Deulwyn to Dafydd ap Llywelyn ap Gwilym Llwyd of Castell Hywel and his wife Lleucu. Ieuan's poems are currently best found in a collection of work published by Ifor Williams back in 1909.⁹⁹ There are fifty poems in the publication, twenty two of which are *cywyddau serch*. The remaining are a gathering of praise poems, *marwnadau*, and an interesting *ymryson* with Bedo Brwynllys.¹⁰⁰

Love Poetry and Style

Williams (GID, v) includes Ieuan in the 'school' of Dafydd ap Gwilym along with Bedo Brwynllys, Dafydd ap Edmwnd and others. This would help explain the strong presence of love poems in his composition. Williams observes, Ieuan had the ability to 'win ear and heart like the poet of Glan Teifi himself sometimes' (GID, v):¹⁰¹

I Ferch

Dydd da gwna addo deuoed

i wen i thal a wnaeth oed

a hawdd amor ir forwyn

a hawdd fyd a hi oedd fwyn

meinir ydoedd im anerch

main wy fi er mwyn y ferch

allicorus i chusan

lili y goleuni glan

....

(GID IX.1-8 - original orthography retained)

This simple opening gets straight to the point: ‘it is a good day for couples ... and easy to love the maiden and easy it will be for the maiden; she was wanting to greet me...’ The style is reminiscent of Dafydd ap Gwilym but has little of the self deprecating entertainment that leaves the poet, apparently, for ever unrequited.

Williams wonders if Ieuan is definitely the author of all the works he has gathered for the collection. He suggests that the most likely alternative is that some could be by Dafydd ab Edmwnd. Dafydd is characterised as having more attention to detail in the *cynghanedd*, whereas, Ieuan creates his feats more spontaneously (GID, v).

Through an analysis of the patrons, their roles and events in their lives reflected in the poems, Williams is able to date Ieuan’s work from between 1466 to 1488. He is named in a *marwnad* to Dafydd ab Edmwnd by Tudur Aled, alongside Dafydd Nanmor as if the three had just died alongside each other:

Llaw Dduw a fu’n lladd Awen.

Lladd enaid holl ddwned hen.

Bwrw Dafydd gelfydd dan gôr,

Bwrw ddoe’n unmeistr, bardd Nanmor

Bwrw Deulwyn y brawd olaf,

Blodau cerdd, ba wlad y caf?

Tair awen oedd i’r triwyr

A fai les i fil o wŷr.

If these poets died almost contemporaneously then it is not surprising to find *marwnadau* by Hywel Rheinallt (PWDN, XL) and Guto'r Glyn (GG.net 54) also praising Dafydd Nanmor and Deio ap Ieuan Du.¹⁰² One can imagine a gathering where these *marwnadau* from brother bards were performed; memories shared, drink imbibed while lives were commemorated and mourned. Given the dates put on the last poems of these poets, their deaths must have been sometime between 1488 and 1490.

Moliant to Castell Hywel

The *moliant* to Dafydd ap Llywelyn ap Gwilym Llywd of Castell Hywel and his wife Lleucu daughter of Ieuan ap Siancyn Llwyd of Llwyndafydd is reminiscent of the works by Lewys Glyn Cothi to the same family (GLGC 73-76, see p.49). There are also works already cited by Deio ap Ieuan Du referring to Lleucu's father (GDIDaGIH 9, 10, see p.24). These connections reinforce the evidence of their being a strong network of families in the area of southern Ceredigion who supported the circuit of these poets and favoured their company in the fifteenth century.

As has been already described (p.48) Castell Hywel sits on the side of hill close to the river Cletwr, a fast flowing hillside stream that feeds into the Teifi not far from Llandysul. This poem uses the rivers, the abundance of land as nature's reflection of the generosity of Dafydd, Lleucu and Siancyn. Particular emphasis is placed on the fairness, gentleness and munificence of Lleucu:

Lleucu dda lle cywydd oedd

Cannwyll o hil Siancyn Llwyd

Llaw yn roi llawen rrull

Lleucu wenn llaw ai cynnull

Roi ddyw nyd hwyr a o ddim

Roi ay gael mae ryw Gwilim

ucha cardod ywch cerdin

isa r fost syar i fin.

(GID XXVIII.10-11,17-22)

Towards the end of the poem there is an attractive image of the water of the Cletwr running down through the hills, a stony place made fertile by Llywelyn's son, a place visited by many. From Castell Hywel springs wine and honey, there is never misery, in truth the gentleman and lady will not be without descendants:

Nyd y dwr Clettwr may clod

eythyr ydy a thair diod

minaweddwr mynyddig

maen aber ym mewn y brig

tir y gryg nys torrai gred

a gai n ar o gynired

ol ar y dir lawer dyn

eb law ol mab Llywelyn

natur ryg yn y tir rydd

cyn dyfod y cann Dafydd.

Lle hewyd Castell Howel

e ginaw y may gwin a mel

ny bor gwr u biayr gwir

ef ay wraig heb fawr egin

(GID XXVIII.39-48,55-58)

This mixing of images of abundance in nature with the profusion of wine, the gentility of Lleucu and the welcome of Dafydd Llwyd is reminiscent of the praise poems of Lewys Glyn Cothi to the same family. Dafydd Johnston (LlU, p.62) observes similarities in their style of poems of praise, notes also their proximity of upbringing, Carmarthenshire, (Ieuan near Kidwelly, Lewys near Llanybydder). Ieuan Deulwyn differs from Glyn Cothi; Ieuan with his fondness for *cywyddau serch* also keeps strong religious themes out of his compositions, though he does write for clerical patrons such as Sion ap Morgan, archdeacon of Carmarthen (GID XXVII).

Political Views

Williams (GID p.ix) suggests that Ieuan had Yorkist sympathies because of his poems for patrons like the Herberts and his mocking of Bedo Brwynllys for playing the ‘two prong stick’¹⁰³ (*ffon ddwybig*, GID XLVI), by composing poems for both the Herberts and for Jasper, the returned Earl of Pembroke, uncle of Henry VII .

As has already been noted (p.59above) Lewys Glyn Cothi showed strong support of those in Wales fighting for the Lancastrian side, but that did not stop him writing poems of praise for the Herbert family too. Given Ieuan and Lewys shared several patrons he may well have been just as politically astute. However, there is evidence that he was unfortunate enough to anger two of his patrons enough to require reconciliation. As Williams puts it, ‘in truth it is civilised and humbling beyond necessity to lick the dust’ (GID,viii).¹⁰⁴ Ieuan

does not appear to have been one to make prophecies like Dafydd Nanmor, take up arms like Iolo Goch or go into hiding like Lewys Glyn Cothi.

Johnston,D. (2014), *Llen yr Uchelwyr: Hanes Beirniadol Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg 1300-1525*, Caerdydd.

References

Morgan, R. (1959), *Ieuan Deulwyn (fl.c1450)*, available at <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-IEUA-DEU-1460.html?query=Ieuan+Deulwyn&field=name> (accessed Oct 2016)

Williams, I.(gol.) (1909), *Casgliad o waith Ieuan Deulwyn o wahanonol ysgriflyfrau*, Bangor. (Available from digital archives such as <archive.org>)

Footnotes

⁹⁹ Williams, I. (gol.) (1909), *Casgliad o waith Ieuan Deulwyn o wahanonol ysgriflyfrau*, Bangor. Available from digital archives such as archive.org.

¹⁰⁰ Bedo Brwynllys was a contemporary poet with whom Ieuan engaged in poetic debate (*ymryson*). Such debates were a common feature of bardic culture.

¹⁰¹ 'ennill clust a chalon fel bardd Glan Teifi ei hun weithiau' - Williams referring to Dafydd ap Gwilym, the famous poet associated with the Teifi valley.

¹⁰² See also the *marwnad* by Hywel Rheinallt (PWDN, XL) and by Guto'r Glyn (GG.net 54). These elegies for multiple poets suggest they died around the same time.

¹⁰³ *Ffon ddwybig* - literally 'two-pronged stick', a metaphor for playing both sides of a political divide.

¹⁰⁴ 'yn wir mae'n wâr a darostyngol tu hwnt i'r angen i lyfu'r llwch' - Williams' assessment of Ieuan's apologetic poems to patrons he had offended.