

3.5 *Cynghanedd Sain*

Dewi Emrys, whom we met in the Introduction, is one of those legendary and colourful figures in our poetic tradition. He was born in Ceredigion in 1881 and brought up in Rhosycaerau, north Pembrokeshire. A trained journalist, he was later ordained as a minister with the Presbyterian Church, but in 1918 he returned to journalism and led what is often described as a 'Bohemian' life in London. Eventually he came back to Wales, to Talgarreg, where he died in 1952. He won the National Eisteddfod Crown in 1926 and the Chair no fewer than four times. (Since then it has become a rule that any one poet is only allowed to win both the Chair and the Crown twice.) For an eisteddfod in Colwyn Bay in 1947 he wrote two *englynion*² on the subject of the horizon. Dewi Emrys himself is said to have believed that the *englyn* that didn't win was the better. Be that as it may, his second choice took the first prize and soon became a favourite throughout Wales.

*Wele rith fel ymyl rhod – o'n cwmpas
Campwaith dewin hynod,
Hen linell bell nad yw'n bod,
Hen derfyn nad yw'n darfod.*

The third line of this *englyn* is an example of *Cynghanedd Sain*:

Hen linell bell nad yw'n bod.

Unlike the lines of *Cynghanedd Groes* and *Draws*, this line has three bars:

Hen linell | bell | nad yw'n bod

Hen linell ('an old line')

bell ('faraway')

nad yw'n bod ('that does not exist')

'An old line faraway that doesn't exist'

² An *englyn* is a four-lined stanza in *cynghanedd* which we will meet in the next chapter.

The last word in the first bar rhymes with the last word in the second bar (which, in this case, happens to be the only word!)

Hen linell | bell
ell ell

The stress in the second bar falls on 'bell' and in the third bar on 'bod'.

The X-ray photograph of the second and third bars reveals this pattern:

/ /
bell | nad yw'n bod
b/ | n d n b/

Using the technique of crossing via the the bridge learnt in the section on the *Cynghanedd Draws* above, we see that the pattern immediately around the stress is the same in both bars – the consonants are in balance.

b / | (n d n) b /

The three bars are in perfect harmony. A rhyme binds bars one and two and a consonantal balance binds bars two and three.

/ /
Hen linell | bell | nad yw'n bod
ell ell
b/ (n d n) b/

In the examples below, it will become clear that the consonantal balance between bars 2 and 3 in *Cynghanedd Sain* is less strict than in *Cynghanedd Groes* or *Draws*. It is only the consonant *immediately before* the stress that needs to find a match on the other side. The ones after it can be ignored and we can cross over consonants in both the middle and the last section – as long as there is a match immediately before the stress: