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# A MISFIT MYTHOLOGY: *HANES TALIESIN* IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AND CULTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Tyler S. Baxter, 1904909

Submitted to the University of Wales Trinity St. David in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA (Celtic Studies), 2023

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## List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| LT[1] | *Llyfr Taliesin* (The Book Of Taliesin) |
| CQ | *The Cambrian Quarterly Magazine And Celtic Repository* |
| IG | The Inundation Of Gwaelod |
| HT | *Hanes Taliesin* (The History Of Taliesin) |
| ME | *The Misfortunes Of Elphin* by T. L. Peacock |
| MAW | *The Myvyrian Archaiology Of Wales* ed. by O. Jones, W. Owen, E. Williams |

[1] Information on the manuscript is available in Appendix II. This essay will most often refer to LT in the sense of it being a collection of poems, not in the sense of the physical manuscript.

**Abstract**

Although authors, poets, and scholars of the nineteenth century frequently cited Taliesin as the preeminent bard of Wales, *Hanes Taliesin* (HT)—particularly the Elphin section—was overshadowed by popular and academic engagement with other traditional tales. Irish and Welsh legends sparked plays, novels, and poetry, but HT had (in the English language, at least) only Thomas Love Peacock's *Misfortunes Of Elphin* to stand alongside Charlotte Guest's and William Owen Pughe's translations of the late medieval tale. By analysing HT's reception during the nineteenth century, this essay attempts to determine reasons behind the relative lack of attention which the story received. To get a sense of contemporary perceptions, periodicals, journals, and books which critique the translations and adaptations of HT are considered. From these, several patterns emerge. Until 1833 writers who worked on HT largely ignored the tale's Gwion Bach strand and downplayed the Elphin strand's supernatural elements. Between 1833 and 1849, Pughe and Guest published their translations of HT, dealing fairly with both strands but providing distinct stylistic treatments and receiving different exposure. Indications of price, print runs, and text editions help us to track the spread of these and other texts featuring HT. The second half of the nineteenth century pivoted to emphasize the Gwion strand, treating it as a religious allegory with the potential to uncover the mysteries of Druidic doctrine. HT was best known to antiquarian scholars; general readers would, by and large, have been aware of it only through Guest's *Mabinogion* or Peacock's novel (or both). It is proposed that HT's reception in the nineteenth century continues to influence the story's reception today, suggesting that a combination of text availability, cultural preferences, and mythologizers' handling of the Gwion strand all play significant roles.

**Acknowledgements**

I am indebted to Dr. Mary-Ann Constantine (University of Wales, Aberystwyth) and Dr. Rhys Kaminski-Jones (University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter) for their supervision and guidance throughout my writing and research. They helped me to avoid several pitfalls and highlighted a few key sources which I may have otherwise missed. Despite distance and time zones, they handily tackled the trials of virtual communication to provide advice and feedback. Their enthusiasm helped me maintain my own motivation to see my dissertation to its conclusion.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Prof. Jane Cartwright, coordinator of the MA in Celtic Studies at University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter. The many modules I completed under her instruction were key in preparing me to begin this undertaking. It is thanks in large part to her efforts that I was inspired to continue my studies in this area, moving from the United States to Ireland to study ancient and medieval languages in 2022.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. John Carey (University College Cork). He directed me to Max Müller's solar myth theory, which became an important element in the analysis at the end of my dissertation. Even though my dissertation focuses on English-language material, Dr. Carey's course in Middle Welsh has helped to put me on surer footing when it came to considering medieval Welsh material in its original language.

## Introduction

Since its inclusion among the twelve medieval Welsh tales translated by Lady Charlotte Guest in 1849, *Hanes Taliesin* (HT) has sat in an uncomfortable position.[2] Debate about the appropriateness of the term 'mabinogion', which Guest applied to these tales, proliferated in the twentieth century; today most would dismiss HT from the group due to its distinct manuscript tradition.[3] Even so, one might expect the only surviving prose narrative about Taliesin—arguably the most famous medieval Welsh poet—to attract attention. Yet while the tales of *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* and *Llyfr Coch Hergest* have been translated numerous times since Guest, HT has seen only one new translation, published nearly half a century ago by Patrick Ford.[4] Ford is also the only academic to publish a monograph on HT, *Ystoria Taliesin* (1992), which he admits 'is only a *continuation*… touch[ing] on a few matters of historical and comparative interest, but the attentive reader will find dozens of topics unattended.'[5] The present essay examines the reception of HT through the nineteenth century with the hope of gaining insight into the attention, or lack thereof, which the tale receives today. The introduction provides context by summarizing scholarship concerning HT from the twentieth century to today and describes HT's manuscript tradition. It also expands upon the rationale for exploring HT's reception pre-1900, and clarifies the methodology employed. The rest of the essay is divided into three parts, which analyze the reception of HT chronologically. Part 1, concerning publications pre-1830, demonstrates favoritism towards the Elphin strand of the tale. Part 2, 1830-1850, covers HT's two translations during the century and their respective reception. Part 3, covering the second half of the century, discusses fluctuating reception alongside partiality towards the Gwion Bach strand. Findings are summarized in the conclusion.

Some of the 'topics unattended' by Ford have been considered by other scholars. The poems appearing in HT, much like other poems attributed to Taliesin—particularly those in *Llyfr Taliesin* (LT)—have long been the subject of discourse which tends to

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[2] Also known as *Ystoria Taliesin* (The History of Taliesin).
[3] For the use of the terms 'mabinogi' and 'mabinogion', see R. Bromwich, '"The Mabinogion" and Lady Charlotte Guest', *Transactions Of The Honourable Society Of Cymmrodorion* (1986), 127-142; S. Davies, 'A Charming Guest: Translating The *Mabinogion*', *Studia Celtica* 38 (2004), 159-178; and D. Luft, 'The Meaning Of *Mabinogi*', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 62 (2011), 57-79.
[4] The White Book Of Rhydderch, Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales Peniarth MS 4-5; The Red Book Of Hergest, Oxford, Jesus College MS 111; P. Ford, *The Mabinogi And Other Medieval Welsh Tales* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1977).
[5] P. Ford, *Ystoria Taliesin* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), p. ix.

categorize them into historical or 'authentic' works of the sixth-century bard Taliesin, compared to the 'mythical' poems which contain supernatural elements and are generally deemed later.[6] While these categories and the poems assigned to them have remained in flux since the nineteenth century, dating of the poems has remained an important issue, with a tendency towards later dating of the mythical poems by the early 1900s.[7] John Morris-Jones discusses the poems extensively in his 1918 *Taliesin*, but explicitly sidelines HT: 'I must forego for the present any attempt to discuss the Taliesin legend and its relation to the mystic poems.'[8] In the late 1950s, Sir Ifor Williams contributed to the discourse, suggesting the mythical poems originally belonged to a god who became assimilated with the historical Taliesin.[9] Williams refined the categorization of Taliesin poems into two groups: those which could only be explained by reference to HT, and those which did not depend on it.[10] The lens of international folkloric motifs was applied by Kenneth Jackson in 1961 and more thoroughly by Juliette Wood 1980-1981.[11] Aside from Ford, perhaps the most important work concerning HT in recent years is Marged Haycock's *Legendary Poems From The Book Of Taliesin* (2007). While she focuses on LT's poetry, Haycock provides excellent notes in her introduction and to individual poems' HT associations (when present).[12] Taken together, although modern academic treatments of HT are nontrivial, they are sparse compared to scholarship on, for example, *Pedair Cainc* or 'Culhwch Ac Olwen'.

One of the greatest disservices to the popular and academic reception of HT may be its exclusion from nearly every English-language translation of the *Mabinogion* tales since Guest's. This is not to place blame on the translators of the prose tales contained in *Llyfr Gwyn* and *Llyfr Coch*: after all, HT appears in neither manuscript. Approximately two dozen later manuscripts contain at least some reference to HT, and about half of these are relevant to texts which the present essay discusses. I assume readers of this essay are familiar with the tale; familiarity with Guest's translation is especially beneficial. The story can be divided into two strands. The first strand tells

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[6] The Book Of Taliesin, NLW Peniarth MS 2.
[7] Ford, *Ystoria*, pp. 4-6.
[8] J. Morris-Jones, *Taliesin* (London: Society of Cymmrodorion, 1918), p. 253.
[9] I. Williams, *Chedwl Taliesin* (Cardiff: University of Wales, Board of Celtic Studies, 1957), pp. 22-24.
[10] Translated from Welsh into English in J. E. C. Williams, *The Poems Of Taliesin* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1968), p. xviii.
[11] K. Jackson, *International Popular Tale And Early Welsh Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961), pp. 115-116; J. Wood 'The Elphin Section Of *Hanes Taliesin*' *Études Celtiques* 18 (1981), 229-244; J. Wood, 'The Folklore Background Of The Gwion Bach Section Of *Hanes Taliesin*', *BBCS* 29 (1980), 621-634.
[12] Cf. Appendix III.

only the Gwion Bach section of HT in detail, abbreviating the later career of Taliesin. This part of HT describes how Gwion acquires the supernatural wisdom brewed by Ceridwen for her son, Afagddu, and Ceridwen's pursuit of the fleeing Gwion as they each take several animal forms. Eventually, Gwion attempts to hide by turning himself into a kernel atop a pile of grain, but Ceridwen, as a hen, consumes him. She gives birth nine months later and casts the reborn Gwion into the sea. After many days Elphin, son of Gwyddno Garanhir, recovers the infant from his father's salmon weir, giving him the name Taliesin and raising him. Lady Charlotte Guest used two different manuscripts for her translation of HT.[13] London, BL Add. MS 14867 (1755-1763) deals with this Gwion section and was also familiar to an earlier translator of HT, William Owen Pughe. This manuscript in turn seems to derive from Aberystwyth, NLW MS 1553A, copied by Roger Morris and Thomas Evans between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[14]

The second strand in the manuscript tradition records HT's Elphin section. Both strands typically feature Elphin's discovery of Taliesin in the weir: as such, when I discuss either strand, readers may assume the weir scene is included. Years later, Elphin boasts that his wife is more virtuous and his bard more skillful than those of king Maelgwn Gwynedd; the king, enraged by this, imprisons him. The bulk of the strand involves Taliesin using supernatural power and poetic talent to outwit Maelgwn's underlings and prove the validity of Elphin's boasts, thereby securing his freedom. A feature common to both strands, though more prominent in the Elphin strand, is the integration of poems into the narrative. Poems associated with HT are discussed in detail in Appendix III.

There are few manuscripts which record the Elphin strand. All those that survive seem to derive from NLW MS 5276, Elis Gruffydd's *Cronicl O Wech Oesoedd* (mid-sixteenth century). A copy of Gruffydd's HT was made by John Jones, which is now lost, but was copied by David Parry in 1699 and Evan Evans in 1774.[15] Iolo Morganwg copied from Evan Evans, and it was his manuscript that ultimately served as the basis for the 1833 translation of HT by William Owen Pughe in the *Cambrian Quarterly*

[13] Ford discusses this manuscript tradition thoroughly and provides a useful schema in his *Ystoria*. See Ford, *Ystoria*, pp. 55-58. The schema has been recreated, with some cosmetic changes, in Appendix II.
[14] Ford, *Ystoria*, pp. 55-57. Also see Appendix II.
[15] NLW MS 6209E and NLW MS 2005B, respectively.

(CQ) and for Guest's translation of the Elphin strand in her rendition.[16] Despite their reliance on the notorious Iolo Morganwg, the manuscript tradition demonstrates, as Ford puts it, an 'authentic pedigree' for these translations.[17] While complete examples of the Elphin strand are both rare and late in date, allusions to Elphin's imprisonment, Maelgwn's bards, and other aspects of the narrative are plentiful and often quite early (as in LT).

Ford calls HT 'a narrative of central importance for the concepts of poets and poetry in Celtic tradition'.[18] I became curious about the apparent discrepancy between the high regard Taliesin as a poet receives generally versus the attention paid to HT within English literature and culture. Given that modern English-language scholarship on medieval Welsh literature largely stems from the early work of antiquarians in the Celtic Revival, I decided to study the reception of HT among English-speakers during that time. I hoped such a study might provide insight into the reception HT experiences up to the present day.

'Reception' here constitutes the ways in which persons or groups react to the content of the medieval HT narrative. The persons and groups of interest are the English-speaking public, scholars, and creatives of the nineteenth century. By the content of the tale, I mean the specific characters, locales, motifs, and episodes included in HT's Gwion and Elphin strands, as we have them from medieval manuscripts. Evidence for reception can take on a countless variety of forms, but those forms that leave a traceable record behind are finite. The most important sources for this study are translations and adaptations of HT, which move it from its medieval Welsh context into the English-speaking world. It is reactions to these translations and adaptations that constitute most of the remaining evidence under discussion. These take the forms of books, articles, advertisements, letters, and other written media. Finally, we can infer a great deal by piecing together how widespread the translations and adaptations of HT were in the first place. Though difficult to obtain, information on print runs and sales are informative on this front, as is the frequency of the release of any new editions.

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[16] Iolo's manuscript is now NLW MS 13131A. The translations in question are Idrison (W. Owen Pughe) 'The Mabinogi of Taliesin' part 1, *The Cambrian Quarterly Magazine And Celtic Repository* 5(18) (1833), 198-213, Idrison 'The Mabinogi of Taliesin' part 2, *Cambrian Quarterly* 5(19) (1833), 366-382, and C. Guest, *The Mabinogion* vol. 3 (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans; Llandovery: W. Rhŷs, 1849), pp. 356-389.
[17] Ford, *Ystoria*, p. 58. See also Appendix II.
[18] Ibid, p. vii.

Most primary sources have been gathered via online databases, such as ProQuest, and by tracking down materials referenced in books and articles. Most of the evidence under discussion is out of copyright and in the public domain. Where possible, I have provided links in Appendix I and the Bibliography.

Finally, as a guiding principle throughout this analysis, I endeavor to follow the advice of Ifor Williams:

> [W]e must have a fairly clear idea of what their authors were trying to do, what their standards were… We must make an effort to put ourselves in their place and gauge their success or failure by the standards acknowledged to be authoritative in their period.[19]

In the spirit of this idea, the quotations I provide retain their original orthography and punctuation; I have only modernized the typography. Outside of quotations I use consistent spellings for places and characters, such as 'Elphin' instead of 'Elffin', as the former is the most common during this period in English literature.

[19] I. Williams, *Lectures On Early Welsh Poetry* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1954), p. 6.

## Part 1: *Hanes Taliesin* Before 1830

Two decades before Lady Charlotte Guest published her translation of HT, an English satirist, Thomas Love Peacock, assembled scraps of information from summaries and fragments then available to create his own adaptation of the legend in *The Misfortunes Of Elphin* (ME). Given that he supplied most of his novels with contemporary settings, Peacock's was an unlikely candidate for the first complete, published telling of HT in English. The novel is an important source of reception, being the only creative work to adapt HT in full during the nineteenth century.[20] Before examining ME, however, it is useful to survey several works which precede it.

A handful of English summaries and fragments regarding HT were published prior to 1830. The earliest is Evan Evans, whose *Some Specimens Of The Poetry Of The Antient Welsh Bards* (1764) provides a brief summary of the Elphin strand. Evans was the penultimate source of the manuscript used by Pughe for his translation and by Guest for her Elphin section, though Evans' manuscript copy postdates the publication of his *Specimens* by ten years.[21] Evans also copied a manuscript of the Gwion Bach strand circa 1765, though it seems likely he only acquired this manuscript after publishing *Specimens*, as there is no hint of the Gwion strand in his summary. Evans tells us

> It has been my luck to meet with a manuscript of all [Taliesin's] genuine pieces now extant, which was transcribed by the learned Dr. Davies, of Mallwyd, from an old manuscript on vellom of the great antiquary Mr. R. Vaughan, of Hengwrt. This transcript I have shewn to the best antiquaries and critics in the Welsh language now living. They all confess that they do not understand above one half of any of his poems.[22]

The 'old manuscript' is almost certainly LT. LT, however, could not have been Evans' source for his summary of HT, nor does it explain his inclusion of a translation of 'Dyhuddiant Elphin'.[23] Haycock confirms that he must have been working from other material:

> He turned instead to a later 'Taliesin' poem (one associated with the *Ystoria* or *Hanes Taliesin*) since, as he remarked candidly, 'it was the

[20] Cf. *The Sleeping Bard* (Part 3, pp. 33-35)
[21] See Appendix II.
[22] E. Evans, *Some Specimens Of The Poetry Of The Antient Welsh Bards* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1764), p. 54.
[23] 'The Consolation Of Elphin'. Evans, *Specimens*, pp. 56-57. See also Appendix III.

> only one I could thoroughly understand.' His *Dissertatio de Bardis* included some extracts, but perpetuated the confusion between the contents of the Book of Taliesin and the later poems associated with *Hanes Taliesin*.[24]

This lack of clarity perpetuated by Evans makes it impossible to be certain of the source for his summary in *Specimens*. However, the close association between HT and LT at this early date provides precedent for later comparisons. Evans is aware that not all the poems attributed to Taliesin are genuine but does not appear to recognize that HT is of a later date.[25] This is important as the relative lateness of the HT manuscripts may contribute to its spotty reception.[26] Evans laments

> It is a great pity Taliesin is so obscure, for there are many particulars in his poems that would throw great light upon the history, notions, and manners of the ancient Britons, especially the Druids, a great part of whose learning it is certain he had imbibed.[27]

Along with indicating Taliesin's obscurity, this marks an early point in a theme we will see regarding HT's reception. Many commentators through the turn of the twentieth century expressed belief that the material concerning Taliesin, including HT, conceals clues to forgotten history and the mysterious Druidic religion.

Thirty years later, Edward Jones provided a similar summary of the Elphin strand in *Musical And Poetical Relicks Of The Welsh Bards*.[28] His *Bardic Museum* (1802) adds more detail, and the absence of the Gwion strand is remarked upon: 'the only fish he [Elphin] found in the wear was Taliesin: how he came there, is too long and romantic to relate'.[29] While Jones' summary is quite thorough regarding Elphin's boasts and imprisonment, the episode with Maelgwn's son Rhun, and the horse race which concludes the tale, the contention against Maelgwn's bards is scanty:

> Taliesin now resolves to set his patron at liberty: in order to this, he goes to Maelgwn's court, where he was not known; and by his superior skill, assisted, however, by a little sorcery, he overcomes all the laureats of the palace; asserts his lady's chastity; proves her innocence; and does some

[24] Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, pp. 3-4. She quotes Evans, *Specimens*, p. 53.
[25] Evans, *Specimens*, pp. 53-54.
[26] See Part 3, pp. 41-46, and the Conclusion, p. 49.
[27] Evans, *Specimens*, p. 54.
[28] E. Jones, *Musical And Poetical Relicks Of The Welsh Bards* (London, 1794), p. 18.
[29] E. Jones, *The Bardic Museum* (London: A. Strahan, 1802), p. 19.

> other wonders, which restores his patron to liberty, and the favour of his prince, &c.[30]

Jones seems reluctant, perhaps even embarrassed, to describe magical episodes in detail. Evans, intentionally or by happenstance, also leaves out magical elements for his summary. J. H. Parry continues the trend in *Cambrian Plutarch* (1824). He postulates that Taliesin was an orphan charitably taken in by Elphin, and that the weir episode 'may have been adopted to veil with a romantic interest the uncertainty of his parentage.'[31] Much of Parry's discussion of Taliesin is an exercise in euhemerism. He admits to Taliesin being well-versed in Druidic mysteries and occult science, especially favoring metempsychosis (reincarnation through different animal forms) but disparages the latter as a 'wild theory'. [32] Like Evans and Jones, he only acknowledges the Elphin strand.

By contrast, the supernatural Gwion strand was key in Edward Davies' *Mythology And Rites Of The British Druids* (1809). Davies' work is complex, and the motives behind his book require context. According to Marilyn Butler, the use of myth in poetry in eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Britain was generally understood to signal detachment from the Church through secular radicalism (or deism). To combat this, British clergymen produced massive works to try to prove that paganism, the source material for contemporary mythologizers, postdated and was a corruption of Judaism. Success in their endeavor would reduce the status of pagan myth to ignorant misinterpretations of the Old Testament. Thomas Maurice tackled Hinduism in 1792, G.S. Faber focused on the Greeks in 1816, and Edward Davies addressed Celtic paganism (i.e., Druidism) between 1804 with his *Celtic Researches* and 1809 with *Mythology And Rites*. Davies' inspiration was Jacob Bryant, whose 1774 *Analysis Of Ancient Mythology* used the idea that pagan religions referred to a great flood to 'prove' their believers remembered the Biblical Deluge and the Ark. This served as Bryant's lynchpin in demonstrating that paganism stemmed from a misunderstanding of the only 'true' religion. Davies took up this strategy.[33] At the end of the second section of

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[30] Jones, *Bardic Museum*, p. 19.
[31] J. H. Parry, *The Cambrian Plutarch* (London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, 1824), p. 42.
[32] Parry, *Cambrian Plutarch*, p. 46.
[33] M. Butler, 'Druids, Bards And Twice-Born Bacchus: Peacock's Engagement With Primitive Mythology', *The Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin* 36 (1985), 57-76 (pp. 57-58). Butler provides a fuller treatment of these themes, though without such HT-specific considerations, in M. Butler, *Mapping Mythologies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

*Mythology And Rites*, preceding the section concerning HT, Davies sets forth an argument claiming that the Druids 'recognized the character of the patriarch Noah, whom they worshipped as a god, in conjunction with the sun'.[34] He also claims there was a goddess representing the Ark, whom he identifies with Ceridwen. As to HT itself, he believes

> It is a mythological allegory, upon the subject of initiation into the mystical rites of Ceridwen. And though the reader of cultivated taste may be offended at its seeming extravagance, I cannot but esteem it is one of the most precious morsels of British antiquity, which is now extant.[35]

Though *Mythology And Rites* may be the first major work in English to treat HT as a religious allegory, we will see that the idea reemerges, not without controversy, during the latter half of the nineteenth century.[36] Davies' comment suggesting that the 'extravagance' of HT offends men of culture is clearly aimed at people like Edward Jones.

Davies also relied on a tradition concerning Elphin's father Gwyddno, which was first touched upon by Evans. *Specimens* introduced HT in the following manner:

> Gwyddno Garanir, was a petty king of Crantre'r Gwaelod, whose country was drowned by the sea, in a great inundation that happened about the year 560, through the carelessness of the person into whose care the dams were committed, as appears from a poem of Taliesin upon that sad catastrophe.[37]

Jones gives us both the name of this careless person and a fragment of the poem referenced by Evans. Jones' translation begins

> Seithenin come forth,
> And behold the land of warriors:
> The ocean hath o'erwhelm'd the plains of Gwyddno.[38]

According to Jones, the Inundation of Gwaelod (IG) occurs when this Seithenyn, drunk, neglects to close floodgates that form part of a network of 'embankments, mounds, and

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[34] He refers to these pagan heresies—the worship of the sun and the Ark or Noah—as Helio-Arkite. E. Davies, *The Mythology And Rites Of The British Druids* (London: J. Booth, 1809), p. 180.
[35] Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, p. 186.
[36] See Part 3.
[37] Evans, *Specimens*, p. 52.
[38] Jones, *Bardic Museum*, p. 17.

fences' which protect the territory.[39] The lost lands lie below present-day Bae Ceredigion. The close connection between IG and HT gives Davies the perfect 'evidence' to support his Arkite theories.

Section III of *Mythology And Rites*, the part concerning HT, consists of four chapters, each beginning with a translation or summary of part of the Gwion strand which is then discussed by Davies. One of his primary strategies in developing arguments is to find equivalencies between characters and symbols of various mythologies (inevitably mapping to archetypes from the Biblical Flood). Pseudo-etymological arguments, comparison with other Welsh material (such as LT) and appeals to authors like Bryant back up Davies' claims. For example, he equates Tegid Foel (Ceridwen's husband) with Noah, Gwyddno, and Seithenyn; matches Ceridwen herself to the Ark; and connects Afagddu with Elphin as dark and light sides of a solar deity.[40] Though it is easy to critique Davies' work today, even the esteemed Ifor Williams suggested analogous theories in the latter half of the twentieth century. While Davies saw a Biblical foundation corrupted by pagan ignorance, Williams saw the story of a pagan divinity corrupted by Christian censorship.[41]

In his fourth chapter on HT, having covered the Gwion strand, Davies proclaims

> I have now considered the whole of that singular story, called *Hanes Taliesin*: I have shewn, that it relates to succession ceremonies, by which the ancient Britons commemorated the history of the deluge…[42]

Davies does not see the Elphin strand as belonging to HT, saying only that 'The mystical poems represent Maelgwn, as having confined Elphin to a strong stone tower.' He considers whether this is 'mere mythology' or if it perhaps represents Maelgwn prohibiting 'heathenish rites', but despite his verbosity elsewhere has nothing more to say on the matter.[43]

Davies probably knew the Elphin strand: he references Evans' *Specimens* in *Celtic Researches*.[44] In *Mythology And Rites* he draws upon Pughe's *Cambrian Biography* and *The Myvyrian Archaiology Of Wales* (MAW). The *Cambrian Biography* is an encyclopedic text which includes brief descriptions of numerous Welsh characters.

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[39] Jones, *Bardic Museum*, pp. 17-18.
[40] Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, pp. 195-198, 204-205, 232-236, and 244-246.
[41] Cf. Williams, *Chedwl Taliesin*, pp. 22-24.
[42] Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, p. 255.
[43] Ibid, p. 246.
[44] See note to '*Bustl Y Beirdd*' in O. Jones, E. Williams, and W. Owen, *The Myvyrian Archaiology Of Wales* vol 1 (London: Longman and Rees, 1801), p. 27. See also Davies, *Celtic Researches* (London: J. Booth, 1804), p. 245.

Though they added little to the information already available for HT by this date, entries are included for Ceridwen, Elphin, Gwion Bach, Gwyddno, Maelgwn Gwynedd, Seithenyn, and Taliesin.[45] Seithenyn's entry tells us he is the son of Seithyn Saidi, is a prince of Dyfed, and is one of the 'three arrant drunkards' of Britain, which Davies goes on to repeat.[46] MAW is an important collection of extracts from the Welsh manuscript corpus edited by Pughe, Owen Jones (Owain Myvyr), and Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg). While it included poems from HT and LT, these are in Welsh, so the collection does not have direct bearing on HT reception in English. MAW does not include the full Elphin strand in its section of Taliesin's work, though it does summarize the Gwion strand in Welsh, perhaps explaining why Davies excluded the Elphin strand from his book.[47] Equally, Davies might have seen the Elphin strand as inconsequential to his Helio-Arkite concepts.

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, Davies was alone in his focus of the Gwion strand, his emphasis on supernatural elements, and even his perception of HT as a mythological allegory. Indeed, most contemporaries responded to *Mythology And Rites* negatively. The *Edinburgh Review*, a prominent journal, was especially critical. The same journal was a favorite of Thomas Love Peacock during the period in which controversy around myth and its association with radicalism peaked (c. 1790-1812).[48] He was among the poet-mythologizers, with his verse released through 1818 including *The Genius Of The Thames*, *The Round Table*, and *Rhododaphne*.[49] His essay *The Four Ages Of Poetry*, novel *Maid Marion*, and unfinished *Sir Calidore* were mythopoeic contributions in prose.[50] But it is ME that is 'the culmination of Peacock's concern with myth'.[51]

Born in 1785, Peacock grew up near London under tenuous financial circumstances.[52] Unable to afford extensive education, his modest successes depended on self-study, talent, and connections. An 1875 commentator remarked 'It is through his connection with Shelley that Peacock is best known to many readers'.[53] Percy Bysshe

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[45] W. Owen (Owen Pughe), *The Cambrian Biography* (London: E. Williams, 1803), pp. 73, 112, 162, 170-171, 177, 236, 314-315, and 321, respectively.
[46] Owen, *Cambrian Biography*, p. 314. The epithet refers to one of the so-called 'third series' of Welsh triads, which were largely fabricated by Iolo Morganwg.
[47] Jones et al., MAW vol 1, pp. 17-18.
[48] Butler, 'Druids', p. 58.
[49] 1810, 1817, and 1818, respectively.
[50] 1820, 1822, and c. 1816.
[51] Butler, 'Druids', p. 57.
[52] N. Joukovsky, 'Peacock Before *Headlong Hall*: A New Look At His Early Years', *The Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin* 36 (1985), 1-40 (pp. 4-5).
[53] '*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*', *The Athenaeum*, 9th January 1875, 49-50 (p. 49).

Shelley was one of Peacock's closest friends, and through this relationship Peacock became acquainted with several of the radical poets who so concerned conservatives and clerics like Davies. To summarize Butler's description of his relationship with myth, Peacock held a positive, romantic view of mythology into the mid-1810s. By 1820 the influence of his friend (later enemy) James Mill prompted him to write *The Four Ages Of Poetry*. Mill's *History Of British India* suggested, derogatorily, that 'primitive' poetry severed merely to aid memory and preserve superstition; Peacock's essay followed Mill's lead and was so severe towards the modern fashion for primitivism and mythology in poetry that Shelley wrote 'A Defence Of Poetry' in rebuttal. By the late 1820s, Peacock's fluctuating opinions on myth reached equilibrium. He never returned to the enthusiasm of his early poetry but remained deeply appreciative of antiquities. He was reluctant to accept the paradigm of Western superiority and accepted paganism as at least equal to Christianity.[54] ME reflects these views.

Equally if not more important to ME's genesis was Peacock's relationship with Wales. Thanks to growing popularity of guidebooks and travel memoirs, by 1810 Wales became a noteworthy destination.[55] Peacock, fond of nature, followed a guidebook to Maentwrog, Meirionnydd, in early 1810. This was 'a remote hamlet which at that time consisted of seven houses only. The remote valley... was one of the most beautiful in Wales'.[56] He stayed for an extended period, having books and clothes sent to him there.[57] While he found the landscape enchanting, he was initially disappointed in the Welsh themselves, feeling they lacked the romantic qualities he expected. His neighbors were not all keen on him, either, if we can trust Shelley's recollection of the words of a local: 'there Mr. Peacock lived in a cottage near Tan y bwlch, associating with no one, and hiding his head like a murderer; but… he was *worse than that*, he was an *Atheist*.'[58] The antagonism did not last; Peacock soon met and became infatuated with a Welshwoman, Jane Gryffydh, whom he married in 1820. He was in and out of Wales—mostly North Wales—until his final visit in 1831, following the death of his wife.[59]

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[54] Butler, 'Druids', pp. 72-76.
[55] Incidentally, Thomas Pennant mentions the weir episode in his *Tour Of Wales* of 1781. Though Pennant does not add anything new to what Evans provided in *Specimens*, his work was read widely. See T. Pennant, *A Tour In Wales II: A Journey To Snowdon* (London: Henry Hughes, 1781), pp. 147-148 and L. Madden, 'Terrestrial Paradise: The Welsh Dimension In Peacock's Life And Work', *The Keats-Shelly Memorial Bulletin* 36 (1985), 41-56 (pp. 41-42).
[56] H. Wright, 'The Associations Of Thomas Love Peacock With Wales', *Essays And Studies* 12 (1926), 24-46 (pp. 24-25).
[57] Wright, 'Associations', pp. 24, 30.
[58] Recorded in a letter from Shelley to Hookham. Wright, 'Associations', p. 28.
[59] Wright, 'Associations', pp. 29-31; Madden, 'Terrestrial Paradise', pp. 52-55.

Regarding ME, Peacock's most important associations with Wales were the relationships he forged, his acquisition of the language, and his enchantment with the landscape. Among his most important new connections were the Cymmrodorion society and its membership, particularly William Owen Pughe. Peacock was introduced to Pughe through their mutual friend Edward Scott in 1823, and in 1824 joined his two friends as a member of the Cymmrodorion. This antiquarian society sought to collect manuscripts and advance research on Welsh history, language, and literature.[60] Such societies were invaluable for both the expertise of their members and their access to research materials. Peacock likely owed the acquisition of many sources for ME to the Cymmrodorion. They, or at least Pughe, also assisted him with the Welsh language. Though biographers have determined that Peacock learned Welsh, his proficiency may not have been sufficient to translate early poetry without aid. Jane might have helped him, and we know Pughe sent him a translation of a Taliesin poem in 1826.[61] Herbert Wright and Lionel Madden have written extensively about Peacock's fascination with the Welsh landscape: I will not replicate their work here, except to mention one encounter in 1810. At this time, Peacock visited an embankment being constructed for the purposes of reclaiming land to improve trade between Meirionnydd and Caernarfon.[62] In *Headlong Hall* he describes its impact on the scenery with regret.[63] The artificial exclusion of the sea is turned on its head in Peacock's retelling of IG.

ME begins when one of Gwyddno's retainers becomes worried about the state of Gwaelod's seawall. He brings his concerns to Gwyddno's son Elphin, and the two proceed to the court of Prince Seithenyn, High Commissioner of Embankment. Seithenyn, true to the triad describing him as one of the 'three arrant drunkards', is—with his court—deep in his cups when Elphin arrives. He addresses Elphin's concerns in a speech against change, parodying Canning's opposition to Parliamentary reform.[64]

> 'I say, the parts [of the embankment] that are rotten give elasticity to those that are sound: they give them elasticity, elasticity, elasticity. If it were all sound, it would break by its own obstinate stiffness: the soundness is checked by the rottenness, and the stiffness is balanced by

[60] Madden, 'Terrestrial Paradise', pp. 49-50.
[61] Namely, 'Kychwedyl a'm dodyw', commonly referred to as 'Canu Y Gwynt', for details of which see Appendix III. William Owen Pughe's journal records on 6 March, 1826: '…at T. L. Peacock, o gylç canu y gwynt gàn Taliesin' ('…to T. L. Peacock, concerning canu y gwynt by Taliesin'); on 15 March 1826: 'Cyvysgrivaw Canu y Gwynt a çyvieithiad i T. L. Peacock' ('Transcribing Canu y Gwynt and a translation for T. L. Peacock'). My thanks to Rhys Kaminski-Jones for pointing me to these extracts and supplying translations. Aberystwyth, NLW MS 13248B, pp. 424-425.
[62] Madden, 'Terrestrail Paradise', p. 42.
[63] T. Peacock, *Headlong Hall* 2nd edition (London: T. Hookham, 1816), pp. 98-99.
[64] Wright, Associations, pp. 45-46.

> the elasticity. There is nothing so dangerous as innovation. See the waves in equinoctial storms, dashing and clashing, roaring and pouring, spattering and battering, rattling and battling against it. I would not be so presumptuous as to say, I could build anything that would stand against them half an hour; and here this immortal old work, which God forbid the finger of modern mason should bring into jeopardy, this immortal work has stood for centuries, and will stand for centuries more, if we let it alone. It is well: it works well: let well alone. Cupbearer, fill. It was half rotten when I was born, and that is a conclusive reason why it should be three parts rotten when I die.'[65]

A storm brews outside; not long after this speech the embankment bursts. Seithenyn is swept away. Gwyddno loses most of his land and wealth.

Here, the novel turns to the weir scene and the Elphin strand. Consistent with tradition, Peacock includes his own version of 'Dyhuddiant Elphin' following his discovery of the infant Taliesin, but much like Parry he rationalizes it as a later composition:

> In after years, Taliesin being on the safe side of prophecy, and writing after the event, addressed a poem to Elphin, in the character of the foundling of the coracle, in which he supposes himself, at the moment of his discovery, to have addressed Elphin[.][66]

While HT glosses over Taliesin's upbringing, Peacock relates the bard's formative years in 'The Education Of Taliesin'. The chapter is ideologically charged and presents an opportunity to examine viewpoints on bardism which colored nineteenth-century perceptions of HT. Here, Peacock satirizes Druids and Christian clergy equally for their follies, oppression, and greed. Their main activities, he says, are extorting money and walking 'occasionally, in a row, chanting unintelligible words, and never speaking in common language'.[67] However, while the Druids are depicted as deficient mystics, their bards are vaunted as bearers of the wisdom of the ages. Gwyddno, himself a bard, instructs Taliesin within nature: the pristine landscape becomes one of Talieisn's most important teachers.[68] Such an idealistic view of bardism is well-attested during the Romantic era: few could read about Taliesin without preconceived notions about what a Celtic bard could or should be. The chapter further reveals Peacock's imperfect understanding of the historical role of poets: while he

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[65] T. Peacock, *The Misfortunes Of Elphin* (London: Thomas Hookham, 1829) pp. 24-25.
[66] Peacock, ME, pp. 74-75.
[67] Ibid, p. 86.
[68] Rowland, 'Sources', pp. 112-113.

embraces a time in which they held powerful roles in society as judges and satirists, he either rejects or fails to appreciate the important roles of praise poetry, battle poems, and the political upheaval of the sixth-century setting in which they are placed.[69]

This is not to say that ME was poorly researched. Several modern scholars have written on Peacock's sources for ME and agree that he met the standards for scholarship for his day.[70] The bardic practices he depicted, as in 'The Education Of Taliesin', are mainly based on Pughe and Iolo Morganwg.[71] More accurately, perhaps, they were drawn from Iolo via Pughe: the latter was susceptible to the former's influence, and it was Iolo's theories about the system of bardic poets—smacking of radical principles—which Pughe published in the introduction to his *Heroic Elegies Of Llywarch Hen*.[72] This particular text seems to have been in Peacock's possession by 1811.[73] Its bards embrace equality and reject authority. In contrast, Davies' *Mythology And Rites*—which Peacock drew on for his Seithenyn chapters and Elphin's discovery of Taliesin—casts aspersions on Iolo and Pughe, implying their definition of 'equality' is a politically convenient anachronism.[74] The *Cambro-Briton*, a bilingual miscellany published 1819-1822, consists of scholarly articles in English, Welsh poems with translations, and triads. Its first volume included a 'bardic portrait' of Taliesin. Its objective, neutral tone downplayed associations with the radical antiquarian societies of the 1790s, at the same time rejecting Davies' conservative Christian propaganda. In terms of handling traditional material, this was the text Peacock most aligned with.[75] Other probable sources include MAW, *The Bardic Museum*, and Meyrick's *Cardiganshire*.[76] The latter, published 1808, discusses IG, includes a brief summary of HT's Elphin strand, and translates several HT poems.[77]

Much like the Elphin strand manuscripts, Peacock includes poems sung by Taliesin against Maelgwn and his bards. Jones' and Evans' summaries say nothing

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[69] Rowland, 'Sources', p. 113. Cf. Iolo Morganwg's argument that bardic tradition (i.e. poetry) is more reliable than prose, e.g. in E. Williams (Iolo Morganwg), *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* vol. 2 (London: J. Nichols, 1794), pp. 221-222.
[70] See, for example, Rowland, 'Sources', p. 106.
[71] Rowland, 'Sources', pp. 105-106.
[72] G. Carr, *William Owen Pughe* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1983), p. 29.
[73] Rowland, 'Sources', p. 104; Wright, 'Associations', p. 31.
[74] Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, p. 60. See also Butler, 'Druids', pp. 66-67.
[75] Butler, 'Druids', pp. 67-69. J. H. Parry was an editor for the *Cambro-Briton* as well as for *Transacritons Of The Cymmrodorion Society*, so Peacock may have known the euhemeristic account in the *Cambrain Plutarch* as well.
[76] Wright, 'Associations', pp. 38-39.
[77] Meyrick includes translations of 'Gwyddneu Ai Cant', 'Hanes Taliesin', and 'Dyhuddiant Elphin'. See S. R. Meyrick, *The History And Antiquities Of The County Of Cardigan* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orm, 1808), pp. 51-72 and Appendix III.

about verse inclusions to these scenes, but whether by chance or intention Peacock creates an effect similar to the medieval version. Perhaps Pughe, who would publish a translation of HT not long after, provided the suggestion.[78] Alternatively, Peacock may have used context clues in MAW's Taliesin poems to strategically place his loose translations.[79]

Up to this point in the story Peacock follows Jones' summary from *Bardic Museum* quite closely, excepting alterations from the episode with Rhun and some additions, such as Taliesin's romance with Elphin's daughter. Not so from this point forward. Peacock prolongs Elphin's imprisonment by making Maelgwn even more obstinate than in the traditional tale. In response, Taliesin threatens to gain the support of Arthur, high king of Britain. Maelgwn dismisses Arthur as preoccupied with the kidnapping of queen Gwenyvar by the marauder King Melvas.[80] Taliesin extracts a promise from Arthur to free Elphin if he can retrieve Gwenyvar; a task he succeeds at with the unexpected assistance of Seithenyn (who survived the inundation by clinging to an empty wine barrel). By grafting the Melvas story onto HT, ME 'shows Taliesin's power as a persuader and moral force over men; it illustrates the averting of meaningless warfare through reason;' and, in Rowland's opinion, 'it adds an interesting Arthurian episode to a rather frail plot.'[81] Preceding his confrontation with Maelgwn, Arthur holds a Bardic Congress at Caerllion. Many bards compete there, including Llywarch, Merlin, and Aneurin. Taliesin sings Peacock's adaptation of 'Hanes Taliesin', which summarizes the Gwion strand, and wins the highest honors against his famous competitors.[82] Arthur, impressed with and indebted to Taliesin, forces Maelgwn to release Elphin. Taliesin eventually inherits Elphin's kingdom, bringing the novel to its end.

Rowland is not the only commentator to remark on ME's 'frail plot'. In the year following ME's publication, reviewers were divided on whether they found ME to be one of Peacock's best offerings, or one of his worst. On the basis of a disconnected plot, *The Atheneaum* determined Peacock's ME 'is a work less likely to please than any of

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[78] Given that Owen Pughe sent Peacock a translation of 'Canu Y Gwynt', which Peacock adapted in ME (see p. 16, note 61 and Appendix III), and published his translation of HT only four years later, the possibility is tempting to consider.
[79] How much any given poem is a translation and how much is Peacock's own creation varies, but except for 'Taliesin And Melanghel' all are at least inspired by poems which can be found in MAW.
[80] I use Peacock's spelling here; these are most commonly rendered 'Gwenhwyfar' and 'Melwas' in Welsh.
[81] Rowland, 'Sources', p. 119.
[82] Peacock retitles it 'The Cauldron Of Ceridwen' but tells us it is based on the verse 'Hanes Taliesin'. Peacock, ME, p. 225. See also Appendix III.

his former novels.'[83] *Monthly Magazine* expressed a similar opinion, reducing the novel to 'a mere sylvan story'.[84] Given the pains Peacock took to gather his sources and bring them together, these critiques are not entirely fair. That Peacock utilized Welsh material in the first place offended some reviewers, too. While the *Westminster Review* was content to call the underlying tradition 'a peculiar kind of lore',[85] the *Atheneaum* demeaned the Welsh openly:

> The story is laid in Wales; and it is no small objection to the work, that his [Peacock's] former admirable nomenclature… is replaced by the unintelligible cacophonies by which those of the Cymry, who possessed the faculty of speech, distinguished names and places.[86]

As the nineteenth century advanced, British imperialists sought to accuse the natives of their colonies and internal peripheries, including Wales, as holding 'unreasonable, uncivilized and unprogressive customs or tendencies', thus justifying British intervention in those territories and cultures.[87] The Welsh language suffered similar vilification. What appears to be lost upon the *Atheneaum*'s reviewer is that ME satirizes this attitude. Gwyddno's main port

> had not been unknown to the Phoenicians and Carthaginians, when they visited the island for metal, accommodating the inhabitants, in return, with luxuries which they would not otherwise have dreamed of, and which they could very well have done without… imposing on their simplicity, and taking advantage of their ignorance, according to the approved practice of civilized nations[.][88]

On the other side of the spectrum, *La Belle Assemblée* praised ME as 'exceedingly clever'.[89] *The Literary Gazette* found it to be 'one of the most amusing volumes which we have perused for a long, long time.'[90] These periodicals both agreed that Peacock's poems were among ME's highlights. Even those that were critical of the

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[83] '*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*', *The Atheneaum And Literary Chronicle*, 6th May 1829, 276-278 (p. 278).
[84] 'Novels By The Author of *Headlong Hall*' *Monthly Magazine, Or, British Register* 7(40) (1829), 381-392 (p. 391).
[85] 'Art. IX.—*The Misfortunes of Elphin*', *Westminster Review* 10 (1829), 428-435 (p. 429).
[86] '*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*', *The Atheneaum*, p. 278.
[87] J. Aaron, *Welsh Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), p. 50.
[88] Quoted in Aaron, *Welsh Gothic*, pp. 50-51; originally found in Peacock, ME, pp. 2-3.
[89] 'Monthly View Of New Publications, Music, The English And Foreign Drama, The Fine Arts, Literary And Scientific Intelligence, &c.', *La Belle Assemblée: Or, Bell's Court And Fashionable Magazine Addressed Particularly To The Ladies* 53 (1829), 214-226 (p. 214).
[90] '*The Misfortunes of Elphin*'. *The Literary Gazette: A Weekly Journal Of Literature, Science, And The Fine Arts*, 7th March 1829, 153-155 (p. 155).

poems acknowledged 'The Circling Of The Mead Horns' and 'The War-Song Of Dinas Vawr' as 'very pleasing'.[91]

Neither of these poems, however, originate from the HT tradition. In general, the content pertaining to HT appears to have interested contemporaries less than the Peacock's Arthurian episodes and Seithenyn's drunken antics. Besides the weir episode, most reviewers do not synopsize the HT events of the novel at all. When they do, they are sparing:

> The remainder of the story is made up of the capture of Elphin by a perfidious chieftain of greater power than himself; and of his release, by the genius and address of Taliesin, through the instrumentality of king Arthur.[92]

By comparison, the Seithenyn chapters are quoted extensively. Even the antiquarian CQ, which published Pughe's HT translation four years later, was too enamored of Peacock's immortal drunkard to give HT elements much notice:

> We will pass over the love scene between Taliesin and the Princess Melanghel, who entreats him to rescue her father from the castle of Diganwy, where he is imprisoned by Maelgon Gwynedd. We must leave the incarceration of Rhûn, heir-apparent to the throne of Gwynedd… but we cannot make up our minds to leave our old friend, Prince Seithenyn…[93]

CQ did at least note that HT was one of Peacock's main sources, whereas the *Westminster Review* reduced the source material to 'Welsh bardic traditions' and 'the veracious history of the ever memorable king Arthur.'[94] In addition to Seithenyn, *The Literary Gazette* elaborates on 'The Education of Taliesin'.[95] *Monthly Magazine* is unusual as it doesn't mention Seithenyn, devoting itself to the Melvas episodes instead.[96] Either way, those parts of the novel which belong to HT are underrepresented.

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[91] 'Art. IX.—*The Misfortunes of Elphin*', *Westminster Review* 10, p. 430; '*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*', *The Atheneaum*, p. 278. See also Appendix III.
[92] 'Art. IX. —*The Misfortunes of Elphin*', *Westminster Review* 10, p. 429.
[93] '*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*', *The Cambrian Quarterly Magazine And Celtic Repository* 1(2) (1829), 231-240 (p. 239).
[94] '*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*', CQ 1(2), p. 240; 'Art. IX.-*The Misfortunes of Elphin*', *Westminster Review* 10, p. 429.
[95] '*The Misfortunes of Elphin*'. *The Literary Gazette: A Weekly Journal Of Literature, Science, And The Fine Arts*, 7th March 1829, 153-155 (p. 155).
[96] 'Novels By The Author of *Headlong Hall*' *Monthly Magazine, Or, British Register* 7(40) (1829), 381-392.

From 1830 to 1874 further commentary on ME virtually vanished. This has two explanations. One is ME's stubborn refusal to fit into any one genre: per the *Westminster Review*, 'it is neither romance nor satire, although professing to be the one, and being really deeply imbued with the spirit of the other.'[97] To his credit, Peacock's decision to rationalize supernatural elements suited most readers' tastes. CQ proclaimed that 'the author has succeeded in rendering these valuable records of antiquity highly acceptable, not only to natives of the Principality, but to the public in general.'[98] Despite this reviewer's enthusiasm, it was not ME's time to shine. As noted by Rowland and Butler, the remote historical period and unfamiliar Welsh language would have alienated Peacock's usual readers.[99] Similarly, a satirical romance was unlikely to attract readers of historical novels.[100] The other obstacle to continued attention was a lack of availability. William St. Clair estimates ME's first print run included just 750 copies, and no new edition appeared until the posthumous *Collected Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*.[101] This is a very small number of copies to circulate for half a century; few readers would have known it even existed.[102] Given Peacock's financial troubles, even this modest number was only made possible through Peacock's friendship with publisher and bookseller Edward Hookham. Alongside the Cymmrodorion, Hookham's friendship and resources were no doubt essential to ME's completion. Given the novel's unlikely appeal, and therefore uncertain sales, providing even 750 copies was generous.[103]

Thus was the state of the reception of HT before 1830. A scattered collection of summaries, the notions of a cleric with an agenda, and an eccentric novel constituted the whole of the English-speaking world's access to the legend. Evans, Parry, and Davies would have been known to antiquarians and few others; Jones was well-known to English tourists but provided a rather brief treatment; Peacock caught some attention initially, but the HT aspects of ME were often overlooked and the novel failed to circulate widely. The only consistency in terms of HT's narrative, with Davies as the

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[97] 'Art. IX. —*The Misfortunes of Elphin*', *Westminster Review* 10, p. 428.
[98] '*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*', CQ 1(2), p. 240.
[99] Rowland, 'Sources', p. 121; Butler, 'Druids', pp. 63-64.
[100] Rowland, 'Sources', p. 121.
[101] W. St Clair, *The Reading Nation In The Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 629.
[102] The estimated population in England alone—where most of Peacock's readership would have been—was around 13.2 million in 1831, 14.9 million in 1841, and 16.7 million by 1851. St Clair, *Reading Nation*, p. 453.
[103] To compare print runs with some of Peacock's contemporaries writing in similar genres, see St Clair, *The Reading Nation*, pp. 586, 605, 608-609, 629, 636, 643, 649-650.

exception, was that these contributions all focused on the Elphin section and excluded most of the supernatural content of the medieval tradition.

**Part 2: Translations and Their Reception, 1830-1850**

William Owen Pughe published HT's first complete translation in 1833. Born in 1759, he had a long antiquarian career behind him. His life in some ways was an inversion of Peacock's. Having grown up in North Wales to a family of respectable lineage, he began his formal education in Meirionnydd, aged seven.[104] Peacock moved temporarily from London to Meirionnydd; in 1776 Pughe moved from Meirionnydd to London.[105] Peacock gave up formal education; Pughe completed his in England.[106] A chance encounter introduced Pughe to London's Welsh societies and he joined the Gwyneddigion in 1783.[107] There, he befriended Edward Jones and Owen Jones (Owain Myvyr); Myvyr was an important financial backer and brought Pughe into contact with Iolo Morganwg.[108] In a letter to Iolo dated 1788, Pughe expressed a desire to save the cultural treasures of the Welsh (i.e., their manuscripts) by publishing them. This desire resulted in *The Heroic Elegies*, MAW, and other contributions. While Peacock struggled in terms of resources, Pughe had powerful and wealthy connections which made his work possible.[109] Additional correspondents include Edward Davies and John Jones (Tegid) who became a critical contributor to the realization of Guest's *Mabinogion*.[110]

Pughe's translation, which he called 'The Mabinogi Of Taliesin', was published in two parts in CQ under the pseudonym 'Idrison'. The first part includes the Gwion strand, Elphin's imprisonment, and the episode with Rhun. It concludes with Taliesin's arrival at Maelgwn's court. The second part consists of most of HT's poems and the remainder of the Elphin section. Throughout, the Welsh appears alongside the English translation. He prioritized publishing HT because

> no other work of this description, that has come under my observation, can be appropriated with certainty to any determinate period; nor can a more satisfactory clue to the reasons for composing poems in the names of celebrated characters be required.[111]

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[104] G. Carr, *William Owen Pughe* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1983), pp. 1-5.
[105] Returning to Wales later in life.
[106] His formal education seems to have gone relatively uninterrupted, unlike in Peacock's case. Carr, *William Owen Pughe*, p. 6.
[107] Carr, *William Owen Pughe*, p. 12. This was the first of many societies Pughe would be involved in.
[108] Ibid, pp. 7, 12.
[109] Ibid, pp. 15, 106, 112.
[110] Ibid, pp. 81, 91.
[111] Idrison, 'Taliesin' part 1, p. 198.

To the first point, Pughe (incorrectly) dates his manuscript's source to 1370, further determining that the 'style and language' of some of the poems suggests twelfth or thirteenth-century composition.[112] As a result, we must 'discard them as the genuine compositions of Taliesin' who was active in the sixth century.[113] As to how HT enlightens us regarding the attribution of such poems to Taliesin, he does not elaborate. Instead, he compares HT with Geoffrey of Monmouth's intentions to frame Merlin's prophecies within a connecting narrative, perhaps implying that the HT narrative was created to explain the mythical poems attributed to Taliesin.[114]

CQ, which issued its first volumes in 1829, was co-founded by Thomas Price (Carnhuanawc), who later worked with Guest and Tegid.[115] Despite positive reviews from its inception, CQ printed its final volume the same year as Pughe's HT publication.[116] As CQ was subscription-based, Pughe's translation had a restricted audience; the periodical's discontinuation further curtailed its distribution. The first acknowledgement of Pughe's translation outside of CQ itself, as far as I can find, was in 1849, in conjunction with the publication of Guest's final volume of *The Mabinogion*.[117]

Like Pughe and Peacock, Guest also had deep personal connections to England and Wales. Born in 1812, Lady Charlotte, daughter of the Ninth Earl of Lindsey, grew up in the wake of societal reaction against the radicalism that proliferated during the French Revolution.[118] To counteract earlier calls for the rights of women by figures such as Mary Wollstonecraft, English society stressed women's domestic roles with an emphasis towards marriage and motherhood.[119] To the tireless, inquisitive Charlotte, this environment was oppressive.[120] Self-education through reading was her primary means of escape. She first took interest in in medieval legends in 1829, coincidentally

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[112] Idrison, 'Taliesin' part 1, p. 198. For more about Pughe's familiarity with HT manuscripts, see Appendix II.
[113] Ibid, p. 199.
[114] Ibid, p. 198.
[115] M. Stephens, *Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 69.
[116] Examples include: '*The Cambrian Quarterly*', *The North Wales Chronicle and General Advertiser*, 15 January 1829, p. 4; 'Literature. *The Cambrian Quarterly Magazine* No. III', *Morning Post*, 14 July 1829, p. 3; 'The Reviewers Reviewed', *The Cambrian*, 4 February 1832, p. 3; and 'Welsh Literature'. *Morning Advertiser*, 15 January 1829, p. 2.
[117] Before Guest, several scholars had ambitions to translate the *Mabinogion* tales. While she was the first to succeed, Pughe had translated the entire collection in manuscript form, for which see A. Johnston, 'William Owen-Pughe And The Mabinogion', *National Library Of Wales Journal* 10(3) (1958), 323-328 (p. 323).
[118] R. Guest and A.V. John, *Lady Charlotte Guest: An Extraordinary Life*, pp. 24, 26.
[119] Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, p. 26.
[120] Ibid, p. 29.

the year of ME's publication.[121] This is reflected in an 1852 inventory of her books, which include works from Jones, Davies, and Pughe.[122] She married a third-generation Welshman, John Guest, in 1833—the year of Pughe's HT—and moved to Dowlais in South Wales.[123] Dowlais would be her primary residence until John's death. Following her sheltered early life, Guest found John's ironworks and its surrounds delightful.[124] She took to her new life with gusto. Having arrived in Dowlais on 15 August, she began learning Welsh on the 23rd.[125] She was studying it in earnest by November, and joined John as a founding member of a local society, Cymdeithas Cymreigyddion Y Fenni. In 1835, the year of Pughe's death, she met the scholar Elijah Waring, who lent her a draft copy of his biography on Iolo Morganwg and inspired her with the idea to make a collection of Welsh legends.[126] With the aid of the Welsh Manuscript Society's Tegid and Price, her first volume of the *Mabinogion* followed in 1838, with the final volume containing HT appearing in 1849. Tegid provided her transcriptions of the tales in modern orthography while Price seems to have helped with preparing her translations for publication and printing, though they were almost certainly less involved with HT.[127] Though Guest seems to have translated most of her tales without reference to preexisting translations, HT was the exception.[128] While the prose elements do not rely on Pughe, she uses his translations for most of the poems with only minor changes.[129]

Even so, their versions differ in both presentation and impact. Both included the Welsh and English, but while Pughe put the languages side-by-side, Guest supplied the Welsh first, updated to modern orthography, and provided her translation second. Her translation was published with 'Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig' and 'Lludd A Llevelys' to complete the original seven volume collection.[130] In that same year, a lavish three volume set 'with Woodcuts and Facsimilies' was produced: contrast this with Pughe's

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[121] Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, pp. 29-30, 37-38.
[122] Ibid, pp. 251-252.
[123] Ibid, pp. 38, 42.
[124] Ibid, p. 49.
[125] R. Bromwich, '"The Mabinogion" And Lady Charlotte Guest', *Transactions Of The Honourable Society Of Cymmrodorion* 1986 (1986), 127-141 (p. 133); Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, p. 102.
[126] Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, pp. 102.
[127] Price died late in 1848. Tegid provided transcriptions from a copy of *Llyfr Coch* but for HT Guest's notes suggest she accessed her manuscripts directly. She also had access to Pughe's and Taliesin Williams' translations (the latter was inexact and never published). Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, pp. 104, 113, 250. See also Appendix II.
[128] Rachel Bromwich notes that though Guest certainly knew Pughe's translations of 'Pwyll' and 'Math', comparison suggests she did not rely on them in any way, and that her translation is more accurate in places. Bromwich, '"The Mabinogion" and Guest', p. 136.
[129] Guest, *Mabinogion* vol 3, p. 395.
[130] 'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 21st July 1849, 733; 'Advertisement', *The Literary Gazette*, 11th May 1850, 336.

translation, printed in a short-lived magazine full of technical essays.[131] Pughe recognized a need for accompanying notes but his skills were strongest in translation, while Guest's talents encompassed total production, with copious notes and connections like Price and Tegid to assist her.[132] Pughe clumped many of his poems into one place, while Guest spread them out and integrated them into the narrative.[133] Hers was 'naively and spiritedly told' and 'charming' while Pughe had a reputation for being too 'fanciful' and 'absurdly literal'.[134] Though Pughe planned to publish his own *Mabinogion* and may have intended a final product similar to Guest's, his CQ translation is the only version he managed to publish.[135]

Alongside these discrepancies, reputation played a role in each translation's reception. Pughe's orthography and inventions had made him unpopular in some circles; many potential patrons had become stern critics.[136] Guest, by contrast, developed a positive reputation even before her *Mabinogion*: in 1835, Taliesin Williams, the son of Iolo Morganwg, declared that English settlers in Wales generally failed to 'surmount their national prejudices and unjust animosities…' but he praised Lady Charlotte for her acquisition of the Welsh language and adaptation to its culture.[137]

For the most part, the final volume of *The Mabinogion* was more advertised than reviewed. One rare commentator remarks that the last three tales are 'inferior' to those preceding them, but nevertheless finds HT 'very striking'. He compares the Gwion strand to an episode from the *Arabian Nights* and summarizes portions of the Rhun episode as well as Taliesin's triumph over Maelgwn's bards.[138] Part 3 will look at further reception of Guest's HT for the latter half of the century. Still, there can be little doubt that her *Mabinogion* was widely read; hence Guest's notes to HT would have been part of the tale's wider reception. Her notes fill nearly ten pages in the three-

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[131] 'Advertisement', *The Literary Gazette*, 11th May 1850, 336.
[132] Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, pp. 99-100.
[133] She added additional poems neither in Pughe's translation nor in her manuscripts but taken from MAW: 'Canu Y Med' and 'I'r Gwynt'. Interestingly, Peacock had adapted these poems himself in ME. See Appendix III.
[134] The first quote is from '*The Literature Of The Kymry* And *The Mabinogion, Part VII*', *The Athenaeum* 17th November 1849, 1149-1151 (p. 1150). The rest are summarized from contemporary sources in Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, p. 100.
[135] See Part 2, p. 25, note 117.
[136] Guest and John, *Lady Charlotte Guest*, pp. 99-100.
[137] Ibid, pp. 65.
[138] '*The Literature Of The Kymry* And *The Mabinogion, Part VII*', *The Athenaeum* 17th November 1849, 1149-1151. Guest herself had made the *Arabian Nights* comparison in her notes to HT.

volume edition. As just one example of their contents, she recounts this curious anecdote:

> Taliesin, chief of the Bards… being once fishing at seas in a skin coracle, an Irish pirate ship seized him and his coracle, and bore him away towards Ireland; but while the pirates were at the height of their drunken mirth, Taliesin pushed his coracle to the sea… he was found by Gwyddno's fishermen, by who he was interrogated; and it was when it was ascertained that he was a bard, and the tutor of Elffin, the son of Urien Rheged, the son of Cynvarch:—'I too, have a son named Elffin,' said Gwyddno, 'be thou a bard and teacher to him, also, and I will give thee lands in free tenure.' The terms were accepted; and for several successive years, he spent his time between the courts of Urien Rheged and Gwyddno… but after the territory of Gwyddno had become overwhelmed by the sea, Taliesin was invited by Emperor Arthur, to his court at Caerlleon upon Usk, where he became highly celebrated… It was from this account that Thomas, the son of Einion Offeiriad… formed his romance of Taliesin[.][139]

This account had been published by Taliesin Williams in the *Iolo Manuscripts* a year earlier. It may be one of Iolo's forgeries, but Guest also gives what appears to be a variation on the same story from another source.[140] In any case, it is strikingly similar to ME as it rationalizes HT and connects Taliesin to Arthur. It also brings together HT's legendary protagonist with the historical Taliesin, who wrote praise poetry for Urien Rheged.

Thomas Stephens' *Literature Of The Kymry* also appeared in 1849. In his chapter on mythological poems, Stephens recounts and comments on both strands of HT though he tends to emphasize certain poems over the story itself.[141] To Stephens, HT was 'the most interesting of the Welsh metrical romances' and within it 'the bardic mythology was romanticized, and the vulgar belief in conjuration symbolized [by] Taliesin's transmigrations, and transmutations.'[142] What he means by 'metrical

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[139] Guest, *Mabinogion* vol. 3, pp. 390-391; originally in T. Williams, *Iolo Manuscripts* (Llandovery: William Rees, 1848), p. 458.
[140] Guest, *Mabinogion* vol. 3, p. 392.
[141] The flight of Gwion from Ceridwen is quoted from Davies, and most of the HT poems are Pughe's translations. The rest is summary. The order of the poems, and how they relate to the narrative, may have been inspired by conversation with Guest considering they match the order she uses in her translation (see Stephens, *Literature*, p. x for his gratitude towards Guest and Appendix III regarding the order of poems). His version of 'Canu Y Med' is taken out of Parry's *Cambrian Plutarch* (which had been reprinted in 1834). For 'Dyhuddiant Elphin' he uses M.C. Llewelyn's 1846 translation from *Archaeologia Cambrensis*. Llewelyn felt it necessary to summarize HT, but her main reference was MAW—she appears to have been unaware of Pughe's translation, supporting the supposition that his version was not widely known at that time. See Stephens, *Literature*, p. 182 and Llewelyn, M.C. 'Bardic Translations' *Archaeologia Combrensis* 1(3) (1847), 274-6.
[142] T. Stephens, *The Literature Of The Kymry* (Llandovery: William Rees; London, Longman & Co., 1849), pp. 179-180.

romance' is unclear; he seems to perceive individual poems as verse romances in their own right, finding they share much in common with the prose *Mabinogion*.[143] HT, however, consisting of prose and verse together, does not fit either category.[144] Nor does Stephens provide other examples of prose with verse inclusions. It is therefore difficult to say what he thinks HT is 'most interesting' in comparison to. His second point, suggesting that HT metaphorically describes 'the remains of Druidic mythology', echoes Davies, but he is quick to contradict himself: in HT 'we see the play of rich and imaginative minds. Some persons may see more, but I cannot.'[145] His most extensive commentary refutes Davies' Arkite theories. Otherwise, Stephens views HT simply as a wonder tale interspersed with beautiful poems.[146] None of it, he thinks, can be attributed to Druidic teachings, for 'The Druids were not allowed to reveal their mysteries to the world; among themselves there was no need of revelation.'[147]

Taken together, the work on HT from 1830-1850 comprises extensive but cautious scholarship. The only translations of HT to appear during the century resulted from the efforts of Pughe and Guest. Given that they chose to publish HT, they seem to have held the tale in high regard; however, they emphasized scholarly notes and their roles as translators over opinions and theories in their renditions. Stephens too, despite his praise for HT, has little substantive commentary. Rather than putting forward new ideas into HT discourse, he spends most of his efforts discrediting Davies' mystical interpretations. In so doing, these authors established a firm, relatively unbiased foundation upon which later writers could build upon. It is also interesting to note how they were connected socially and geographically. Pughe was a friend of Peacock, Guest and Stephens collaborated with each other, and all four were involved in Welsh societies. Whereas Peacock and Pughe spent years of their lives in Meirionnydd, the *Literary Gazette* notes that Guest, Taliesin Williams, and Stephens all resided in their own distinct locality 'as if the iron smoke of Merthyr were the atmosphere to nourish Welsh antiquaries.'[148] Given the eschewing of supernatural aspects and favor for the Elphin strand which came before them, Pughe's, Guest's, and Stephens' work also marks an inflection point. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, as I argue in Part 3,

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[143] Stephens, *Literature*, p. 177.
[144] He calls HT a 'mabinogi' (probably following Pughe's designation), further confusing the matter. Stephens, *Literature*, p. 177.
[145] Stephens, *Literature*, pp. 178-179. For the related opinions of Evans and Davies, see Part 1, pp. 9, 12.
[146] Stephens, *Literature*, p. 191.
[147] Ibid, p. 192. Cf. Julius Caesar's account of the Druids, translated in J. T. Koch and J. Carey, *The Celtic Heroic Age* 4th ed. (Aberystwyth: Celtic Studies Publications, 2003).
[148] 'Welsh Literature', *The Literary Gazette: A Weekly Journal Of Literature, Science, And The Fine Arts*, 29th December 1849, 940-941 (p. 941).

commentators shifted their attention away from the Elphin strand and towards the mysticism they perceived within the Gwion strand instead.

**Part 3: Reception 1850-1900**

From 1850, references to HT propagated in conjunction with the latest scholarship and new editions of Guest and Peacock but dried up during the years between these publications. The Elphin strand sometimes featured in discussions of the transition from paganism to Christianity, but otherwise became an afterthought. Interest in the reconstruction of Celtic mythology drew commentators to the Gwion strand instead: it especially featured in debates on Druidic belief in metempsychosis. In intellectual circles, skepticism that HT contained fossilized pagan doctrine shifted towards credence by the century's end.

Only one sizeable contribution to HT discourse appeared during the third quarter of the century: D. W. Nash's *Taliesin, Or, The Bards And Druids Of Britain* (1858). Texts going either unread or out of print, alongside suspicions regarding HT's authenticity, seem to account for this span of minimal activity. Most skeptics accepted HT's medieval origins but, following Stephens, doubted whether HT depicts authentic Druidic mysticism.[149] A writer for the *Quarterly Review* in 1852 grouchily requested such theories 'be either propounded with the modesty which befits mere conjectures, or supported by something like argument'.[150] The article anticipates several of the trends that would develop during the second half of the century, such as increasing emphasis on the Gwion strand:

> It is… as the son of the mystic Ceridwen, the British Medea, or personified Nature, who renewed all things in her seething cauldron, and also as the blender, with Christian forms, of ideas drawn from the Druidical metempsychosis, that Taliesin passed through the admiration of his countrymen into the story of the world.[151]

Nash echoed this sentiment a few years later.[152] The article claims that 'Taliesin may be considered as representing the period of transition from the true Druidical bardism to [a] more Christian stage'; an idea that Sir John Rhŷs would revisit in the late 1880s.[153]

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[149] One writer, W. F. Skene, *did* question HT's manuscript pedigree, discussed later in this section, pp. 34-35.
[150] 'Art I. 1. *Les Bardes Bretons: Poèmes Du Vie Siècle*, 2. *Cyclops Christianus*, 3. *Supplement For 1850 To The Archaeologia Cambrensis*', *The Quarterly Review* 91(182) (1852), 273-315 (p. 297).
[151] 'Art I. 1. *Les Bardes Bretons*', p. 296.
[152] D. W. Nash *Taliesin, Or, The Bards And Druids Of Britain* (London: John Russell Smith, 1858), p. 39.
[153] 'Art I. 1. *Les Bardes Bretons*', p. 298.

Though he praises Guest and Stephens, Nash lambasts the esoteric insights of Iolo, Pughe, and Davies in *Taliesin*.[154] Referring to the poems collected in MAW, he asserts

> the poems ascribed to Taliesin in particular, are for the most part made up of allusions to local, sometimes historical events, references to the Mabinogion, or fairy and romance tales of the Welsh, scraps of geography and philosophy, phrases of monkish Latin, moral and religious sentiments, proverbs and adages, mixed together in wonderful confusion, sometimes all in the compass of one short ballad. They demonstrate most clearly, that, however ancient some of the fragments mixed up with them may be, these ballads were not reduced into writing until long after they had been handed down, by oral transmission, through the recitals of these itinerant minstrels. They furnish the best commentary on the monstrous imposture of Edward Williams and his son Taliesin Williams, and the reveries of Davies and Dr. Owen[.][155]

This passage extracts fleeting uncertainties from earlier discourse and synthesizes them into blunt condemnation. Though accepting Stephens' arguments dating HT's composition to the thirteenth century, Nash argues that 'the Druidism, philosophy, and superstition, of the Bards of the sixth century' can be eliminated from discourse on Taliesin material.[156] Alongside detailed justifications for this stance, he provides several insights regarding HT's wider reception. According to him, *Literature Of The Kymry* did little to counteract a pervasive belief in Druidic survivals:

> So little importance has indeed been attached to the critical views of Mr. Stephens by his countrymen, and so little effect has his work published in 1849 produced upon this question of the antiquity and nature of the Welsh poems, that the old opinion, that they contain philosophical dogmas, and notices of Druid or Pagan superstitions of a remote origin, has been as distinctly promulgated in 1853… as they were by the Rev. Edward Davies in 1809. In truth, as Mr. Stephens has himself observed, any opinion on the date or character of these poems, unaccompanied by translations, has no very strong claims to attention, apart from the weight attached to the opinion of the critic.[157]

Nash's point on the role of translations warrants some attention. He claims that without translations, reception of medieval Welsh material rests solely on the opinions of those who can interpret archaic Welsh. This is an Anglo-centric view, but it is worth

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[154] Nash, *Taliesin*, p. viii.
[155] Ibid, pp. 34-35.
[156] Ibid, p. 36.
[157] The 1853 reference is to J. Williams, *Gomer* (London, Hughes & Butler, 1854), which has no specific commentary on HT. The quote is from Nash, *Taliesin*, p. 61.

following to its logical conclusion. Applying Nash's supposition to HT, we can imagine that reception among English-speakers prior to Guest's (or Pughe's) translation would be unduly influenced by the predilections of earlier authors (e.g., avoidance of supernatural elements). Once a complete translation became available, readers would have a more objective foundation on which to form their own opinions. Even after the publication of HT's translations, however, Nash was unhappy with the opinions readers had formed.

The fourth chapter of *Taliesin* is where Nash considers HT most carefully.[158] Here, he does his best to describe, and then dismantle, mythical insights ascribed to the tale by earlier writers. Notably, he argues against Ceridwen's identification with pagan divinities, against attaching special significance to her cauldron, and against the idea that Taliesin's transformations 'prove' druidic belief in metempsychosis.[159] He concludes that 'There is no more necessity for seeking for a hidden meaning in the tale of Taliesin than in that of Cinderella.'[160] Nash's approach earned him both praise and disapproval: while the *Westminster Review* felt he proved 'that no Druidic or other philosophy was to be found' in Taliesin material, the *London Quarterly* accused him of being 'anti-Celtic'.[161] Although both of these comments appeared a decade after *Taliesin* was published, references to Nash, at least as far as HT are concerned, fell away by the 1870s.

Two rather obscure texts released in the early 1860s alluded to HT. One is a translation by G. H. Borrow of a Welsh novel written over a century earlier, Elis Wynne's *The Sleeping Bard*.[162] The *Quarterly Review* listed it alongside *The Mabinogion* as one of the six 'principal works of the Welsh'.[163] Based partly on the Spanish 'Visions' of Francisco Quevedo, the story is narrated by its protagonist, the titular Sleeping Bard, who experiences a series of visions through the guidance of personified Sleep.[164] In the second chapter, the Sleeping Bard goes on a quest to meet

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[158] Quoted prose is from Guest; Nash did some verse translation but otherwise drew on Stephens and sometimes Guest (and by extension, Pughe).
[159] Nash, *Taliesin*, pp. 180-198.
[160] Ibid, p. 183.
[161] '*The Four Ancient Books of Wales*' *Westminster Review* 36, 1 (1869), 36-79 (p. 40) and 'Art. II—1. *Kennedy's Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*', *London Quarterly Review* 31(61) (1862), 45-85 (p. 52).
[162] First published in Welsh in 1703.
[163] 'Art II—*The Sleeping Bard*', *The Quarterly Review* 109(217), 38-63 (pp. 55-56).
[164] In 1896, American poet Richard Hovey published the first part of *Taliesin: A Masque*. This verse playscript features Taliesin as its primary character and has sleep as an important theme. Most of the play draws on Arthurian legend, with only one early stanza clearly alluding to HT (and IG). See R. Hovey, '*Taliesin: A Masque*: First Movement', *Poet-Lore: A Monthly Magazine Of Letters* 8(1) (1896), 2-14 (p. 2).

Death and on the course of his journey encounters Taliesin. In a footnote, Borrow explains:

> When Elis Wynn represents [Taliesin] as sitting by a cauldron in Hades, he alludes to a wild legend concerning him, to the effect, that he imbibed awen or poetical genius whilst employed in watching 'the seething pot' of the sorceress Cridwen, which legend has much in common with one of the Irish legends about Finn Macoul, which is itself nearly identical with one in the Edda, describing the manner in which Sigurd Fafnisbane became possessed of supernatural wisdom.[165]

In addition to the short summary of the relevant part of the Gwion strand and Borrow's apparent disapproval of the tendency of the Taliesin poems towards 'extravagant metaphor', Borrow connects the inspiration-acquiring tales of Taliesin with Ceridwen's cauldron, the Irish Finn with the salmon of knowledge, and the Norse Sigurd with the roasted heart of Fafnir.[166]

Taliesin proffers a riddle to the protagonist: 'None knows for certainty / Whether fish or flesh I be.'[167] The Sleeping Bard replies:

> 'I know not,' said I, 'what could be your meaning, unless it was, that the yellow plague which destroyed Maelgwn of Gwynedd, put an end to you on the sea-shore, and that your body was divided amongst the crows and the fishes.'[168]

This is a clear reference to the Elphin strand, in which Taliesin, in verse, prophesizes Maelgwn's death at the hands of a golden beast.[169] It is ironic that the Sleeping Bard suggests Taliesin himself met such a fate. It may even be a perversion of Gwion's transformations: instead of transforming into a fish or bird, he is violently consumed by them.

Taliesin's reply is worthy of Peacock:

> 'Peace, fool!' said he, 'I was alluding to my two callings, of man of the law and poet. Please to tell me, has a lawyer more similitude to a raven, than a poet to a whale? How many a one doth a single lawyer divest of his flesh, to swell out his own craw; and with what indifference does he extract the blood, and leave a man half alive! And as for the poet, where is the fish which is able to swallow like him? He is drinking oceans of

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[165] Borrow, G. H. *The Sleeping Bard* (London: John Murray, 1860), p. 49.
[166] Borrow's footnote is, as far as I have been able to find, the earliest to make this connection in an English-language publication.
[167] Borrow, *Sleeping Bard*, p. 49.
[168] Ibid, p. 49.
[169] See the notes to HT in Guest, *The Mabinogion* vol 3, p. 399.

> liquor at all times, but the briny sea itself would not slack his thirst. And provided a man be a poet and a lawyer, how is it possible to know whether he be fish or flesh, especially if he be a courtier to boot, as I was, and obliged to vary his taste to every one's palate… Truth will never be had where there are many poets, nor fair dealing where there are many lawyers[.]'[170]

At this point the conversation is interrupted, and the story moves on. The comparison between medieval poets (i.e. bards) and modern lawyers was also made by Stephens; one of his reviewers quoted Taliesin's satire against Maelgwn's bards (from Guest's HT) to substantiate the point.[171]

For our purposes, the importance of *The Sleeping Bard* is three-fold. Firstly, Borrow's tone in his notes suggest that he, like Nash and Peacock, is skeptical concerning whether pagan mysticism lies hidden within Taliesin material. Secondly, the novel emphasizes material from the Gwion strand. Finally, Borrow connects Taliesin, Finn, and Sigurd, a connection to be utilized in the mythologies constructed decades later by John Rhŷs and Alfred Nutt. Though Borrow tells us the Welsh language version enjoyed popularity in Wales, Borrow's translation was mostly overlooked—the *Quarterly Review*'s article was the only substantial review I could find.[172]

While Borrow's translation was obscure in the sense that it lacked an audience, J. W. Ab Ithel's *Barddas* (1862) was obscure in terms of its content. Purporting to bring together documents 'illustrative of the theology, wisdom, and usages of the Bardo-Druidic system', *Barddas* is the sort of mystical volume Nash disdained.[173] Ab Ithel contends that 'The Cauldron of Ceridwen' and 'Elffin's Chair' are constellations recognized in bardic tradition. His source, however, listed as MAW's verse 'Hanes Taliesin', is hardly a credible treatise on astronomy.[174] His acceptance of Druidic belief in metempsychosis is propped up by equally shaky reasoning:

> The transmigration related by Taliesin is not identical in detail with that of Bardism, for in the latter the soul is not supposed to enter inanimate

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[170] Borrow, *Sleeping Bard*, pp. 50-51.
[171] 'Welsh Literature', *The Literary Gazette: A Weekly Journal Of Literature, Science, And The Fine Arts*, 29th December 1849, 940-941 (p. 941). The poem quoted from Guest is 'Cystwy Y Beirdd' (see Appendix III). See also Stephens, *Literature Of The Kymry*, p. 102.
[172] Borrow, *Sleeping Bard*, p. iii; Cf. R. G. Davies, *The Visions Of The Sleeping Bard* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., Limited; Carnarvon: The Welsh National Press Company, Limited, 1897), p. xvii. Regarding the evidence for reception of Borrow, ProQuest returns about a dozen distinct results when searching 'Sleeping Bard' between 1860 and 1896 (R. G. Davies' 1897 translation is addressed later in this section, see p. 45). Most of the ProQuest results are generic advertisements from 1861.
[173] J. W. Ab Ithel, *Barddas* vol 1 (Llandover: D. J. Roderick; London: Longman & Co., 1862), p. iii. A second volume was published ten years later, but contains no reference to HT.
[174] Ab Ithel, *Barddas*, pp. 403-405. See also Appendix III.

> objects, such as… a grain of wheat… and we infer from this discrepancy that the Bardic doctrine was not directly founded on the poet's language. Still we may regard it as a valuable testimony to the actual existence among the Cymry, at the time when the poems were written, of a doctrine of metempsychosis, whether believed in, or preserved merely as a matter of curiosity.[175]

Whatever his faults, Ab Ithel's emphasis, as with Nash and Borrow, was on the Gwion strand and its alleged representations of Druidic/bardic practice.

The other theme of the century's third quarter, inaccessible materials, compounds with earlier issues of the availability of Peacock's ME and Pughe's translation. Though it is unclear how long Guest's *Mabinogion* remained in print after 1849, by 1866 Matthew Arnold was expressing frustration: 'the *Mabinogion*—that charming collection, for which we owe such a debt of gratitude to Lady Charlotte Guest… she so unkindly suffers to remain out of print.'[176] Earlier in 1860, a writer for *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* drew upon Théodore Hersart de La Villemarqué to summarize HT, even though the writer clearly knew of Guest's work.[177] Villemarqué never provided a full translation of HT unlike Guest, so he seems an odd choice of source in this instance.[178] It is possible that the writer was unable to obtain a copy of Guest's final *Mabinogion* volume, forcing him to rely on other sources. By 1875 the collection remained rare and consequently expensive. Bernard Quaritch advertised one set for 6*l.* 6*s*, twice the 1849 price. Copies of both volumes of *Barddas* (1*l.* 1*s*.), *Literature Of The Kymry* (15*s*.) and the *Iolo Manuscripts* (4*l*. 4*s*.), listed in the same advertisement, were all significantly cheaper.[179]

W. F. Skene helped fill the void left by an out-of-print *Mabinogion* in 1868 with his *Four Ancient Books Of Wales*. There, he sowed doubts about HT's credibility, implying Guest and Pughe's manuscript sources derived solely from Iolo Morganwg, who by this time was no longer regarded as trustworthy.[180] Though experts today know Skene's text is full of errors, his contemporaries embraced him as an authority.[181] D.

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[175] Ab Ithel, *Barddas*, p. xxiv.
[176] M. Arnold, 'The Study Of Celtic Literature', *The Cornhill Magazine* 13(76) (1866), 469-483 (p. 473).
[177] He mentions Guest, under her new surname by her second husband, Schreiber, alongside Villemarqué. 'King Arthur And His Round Table', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 88(539), 311-337 (p. 327).
[178] Guest and Villemarqué had a contentious relationship, for which see M. Constantine and F. Postic, '"C'est mon journal de voyage': La Villemarqué's letters from Wales 1838-1839' (2019), pp. 6-7.
[179] 'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 6th March 1875, 314. Half a year later, the same advertisers still listed *The Mabinogion* as available. 'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 9th October 1875, 461.
[180] W. F. Skene, *The Four Ancient Books Of Wales* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1868), p. 31.
[181] See, for example, '*The Four Ancient Books Of Wales*', *Dublin University Magazine* 72(428) (1868), 226-240; '*The Four Ancient Books Of Wales*', *The North British Review* 49(97) (1868), 149-172; 'Skene's *Four Ancient Books Of Wales*', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 15(57) (1869), 95-96.

Simon Evans refuted Skene's hypothesis in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, but not until 1884.[182] The dismissal of figures like Nash and Skene may well have tarnished HT's reputation, turning potential readers and writers away from it.

Counterbalancing this to some degree, the ongoing issue of access to Guest and Peacock was finally remedied in the mid-1870s. Peacock's *Collected Works* were published in 1875; ME being part of the collection. A plethora of reviews and nods to ME followed. In general, ME was viewed as one of Peacock's most underappreciated novels, a hidden gem of sorts. Discussion and quotations tended, as in 1829, to focus on Seithenyn, Peacock's poetry—particularly 'The War-Song Of Dinas Vawr'—and Arthurian aspects of the narrative. Large sections of 'The Education Of Taliesin' chapter was sometimes quoted, though these sections tended to focus on Peacock's satire and said little about Taliesin himself. Other HT references appeared in plot summaries. The novel became recognizable enough that an 1877 reviewer felt it sensible to compare ME with a newly-released German novel, but granted primacy to IG: 'As in "Elphin" the principal physical incident is in an inundation occasioned by a tremendous *Sturmfluth*, or alliance of tide and tempest[.]'[183] Sources were almost never cited beyond the generic 'Welsh tradition' and no connections were made to the translations of Guest or Pughe.[184] Thus, as in 1829, HT elements were overshadowed.

A new edition of *The Mabinogion* arrived two years after Peacock's *Collected Works*, finally answering Matthew Arnold's appeal. By omitting the Welsh-language versions and condensing some of her notes, Guest consolidated all twelve of her translations into a single volume. In her preface, she tells us

> The Arthurian Legends have at all times furnished a congenial subject to the students of Romance… the publication of the 'Idyls of the King'—and among them, 'Enid,' which is founded on my version of 'Geraint'—has interested a much wider circle of readers in the Legends, and there

[182] Further details can be found in Appendix II. D. S. Evans, 'Miscellanea', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 5th series 1(1) (1884), 75-79.
[183] 'German Literature', *Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science And Art*, 20th January 1877, 90-92 (p. 91).
[184] '*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*', *The Athenaeum*, 9th January 1875, 49-50; Gosse, E.W. '*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*', *The Academy*, 6th March 1875, 234-236; '*Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*', *The Saturday Review*, 20th February 1875, 252-253; 'Art V—*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*', *The Edinburgh Review* 142(289) (1875), 110-143; 'Thomas Love Peacock', *The Examiner* 23rd January 1875, 105-7; G., E. W. 'Thomas Love Peacock', *London Society: An Illustrated Magazine Of Light And Amusing Literature For The Hours Of Relaxation* 27(162) (1875), 496-509; G., R. 'Thomas Love Peacock', *The Examiner*, 30th January 1875, 134-135; Collins, M. 'Thomas Love Peacock: Versifier And Humourist', *The St. James's Magazine* 3(1), 600-610; 'Thomas Love Peacock', *Temple Bar: A London Magazine For Town And Country Readers* 44 (1875), 113-124.

> has arisen a demand for a new and more popular edition of my work, which it is the object of the present issue to supply.[185]

Interest in Arthurian material, galvanized by Alfred Lord Tennyson's *Idylls*, appeared to be the primary driver for a new edition of Guest's work.[186] The *Saturday Review* expands on this supposition:

> As a rule, those of the *Mabinogion* which relate to Arthur and his knights have hitherto attracted most notice… but we are inclined to think that eventually more light on the history of the western part of this island will be derived from a careful study of [*Pedair Cainc*]. These refer but seldom to any of Arthur's supposed contemporaries and companions; never, unless we are mistaken, to that personage himself.[187]

Guest and the *Saturday Review* present two categories of interest: Arthurian tales and *Pedair Cainc*. A third category is suggested by an 1863 writer for *Dublin University Magazine*, who affirmed that early bardic poetry provided the 'most interesting documents relative to the early history of Britain.'[188] HT shares characteristics with *Pedair Cainc*, Arthurian legend, and bardic poetry, but the overlap is imperfect. Its allusions to *Pedair Cainc* are ambiguous, its Arthurian elements minor, and the relations between its prose, verse, and other Taliesin material tangled. HT's resistance to categorization makes it challenging to bring into writing about a particular kind of text, regardless of whether that text-type is based on content, history, or structure. This may have limited HT's print appearances.

A decade of minimal activity followed the new editions of Guest and Peacock. Advertisements from 1888 and 1891 show that Peacock's *Works* remained on store shelves.[189] He was featured in the third volume of Oliphant's *Literary History Of England* (1886), providing some publicity. She commended ME's humor, but her only commentary on its content was in praise of the 'War-Song Of Dinas Vawr'.[190] That same year, George Saintsbury compared Peacock with Borrow:

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[185] C. Guest, *The Mabinogion* 2nd ed (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1877), p. vii.
[186] Taliesin does appear in Tennyson's *Idylls* as Arthur's court bard, but his name occurs only once in 'The Holy Grail'. See A. Tennyson, *The Holy Grail And Other Poems* (Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co.), p. 53.
[187] 'The Mabinogion', *Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science And Art* 2nd November 1878, 567-569 (p. 567).
[188] 'Cymric Studies In Relation To English History And Literature', *Dublin University Magazine* vol. 62 no. 369 (1863), 243-255 (p. 244).
[189] 'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 29th December 1888, 870; 'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 4 July 1891, 48.
[190] M. Oliphant, *Literary History Of England* vol 3 (London: Macmillian & Co, 1886), pp. 154-155.

> The author, like Borrow, is an author by no means universally or even generally known; but this and a very curious robustness of prejudice are the only points of contact between [them].[191]

Consistent with findings to this point, both ME and *The Sleeping Bard* appear to have found only small audiences. Though he praised ME, Saintsbury believed it to be Peacock's least popular novel, saying

> The most curious instance of this general unpopularity is the entire omission, as far as I am aware, of any reference to it in any of the popular guide-books to Wales… [T]he 'War-song of Dinas Vawr,' a triumph of easy verse and covert sarcasm, has had some vogue, but the rest is only known to Peacockians. The abundance of Welsh lore which, at any rate in appearance, it contains, may have had something to do with this; though the translations or adaptations, whether faithful or not, are the best literary renderings of Welsh known to me.[192]

The comment on guidebooks evokes Thomas Pennant's brief mention of the weir scene in his *Tour Of Wales* a century earlier.[193] That Saintsbury believes ME contains information worthy of guidebooks—texts which profess to provide facts about history, culture, and locales—suggests that he believes ME's depictions of Wales and Welsh tradition are objectively reliable. He may have not read HT's translations considering they receive no mention, reflecting the divide between readers of different genres.[194] Even if Saintsbury knew Guest's HT, his proclamation that Peacock provides the 'best literary renderings of Welsh' betrays a preference for an ultimately English creation inspired by Welsh literature, not a direct rendering of traditional materials. Moreover, his phrasing could be taken as veiled disapproval of Welsh literature, implying that only through the intervention of an English writer were such materials rendered acceptable.[195]

Saintsbury's use of the term 'Peacockians' may indicate an early manifestation of Carl Dawson's observation that 'most readers of Peacock become convinced that the few who read him constitute a sort of privileged group,' a feeling bolstered by the 'awareness not only that our friends and colleagues may not have read him but that

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[191] G. Saintsbury, 'Thomas Love Peacock', *Macmillan's Magazine* 53(318) (1886), 414-427 (p. 414).
[192] Saintsbury, 'Thomas Love Peacock', p. 420.
[193] See Part 1, p. 15, note 55.
[194] Then again, Saintsbury must have been attuned to Celtic Studies considering he eventually wrote a monograph on Matthew Arnold (see Appendix I under Garnett, 1899).
[195] Cf. CQ's comments on ME for which see Part 1, p. 22.

relatively few people ever have.'[196] Still, the number of Peacockians seemed to grow as the nineteenth century came to a close, ensuring ME's longevity. J. M. Dent & Co. began to release new editions of Peacock's novels in 1891, with ME appearing in January of 1892.[197] Its editor, Richard Garnett, included several of Guest's HT verse translations in an appendix, and reviewers took notice. Reginald Johnson felt 'The tale of Taliesin… is a stirring one, alike in the old direct narratives and in this humorous modernisation' but still thought Peacock's greatest inclusion was Seithenyn.[198] *The Saturday Review* praised Peacock's abridgement of the Gwion strand:

> As to Peacock's treatment of the mystical birth of Taliesin… we are entirely in agreement with Dr. Garnett's commendation of it. Any supernatural explanation would have been tedious, if not superfluous. The story, as given by the editor from Lady Charlotte Guest's version, will satisfy the reader, who is also offered the opportunity of comparing literal versions of the original Welsh poems with Peacock's spirited lyrical translations.[199]

Apparently, disdain for supernatural elements was still present in some circles. However, thanks to Garnett's inclusion of the 'literal versions' of the poems adapted by Peacock, ME's readers were given a point of reference by which they might pursue Peacock's sources, if they wished.

Scholarship was also evolving. Though it may have satisfied popular readership, Guest's 1877 edition failed to impress the *Saturday Review* when viewed from the perspective of academic rigor:

> dealers in rare books have been selling [*The Mabinogion*] at prices ranging from six to ten pounds, so that it was practically placed beyond the reach of the student. The volume before us will, we fear, go but a short way to meet his wants, as it is only a reprint of the original translation… it does not appear what purpose is answered by including in it most of the original notes, many of which are either inadequate or useless… But the volume has in other respects been carefully got up, and may be safely recommended to the notice of those who are only anxious to get the legends and *märchen* of the Welsh in a readable and

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[196] C. Dawson, 'Peacock's Comedy: A Retrospective Glance', *The Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin* 36 (1985), 102-113 (p. 104).
[197] 'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 28th November 1891, 736; 'Advertisement', *The Academy* 17th December 1892, 576. The publication year actually listed in the edition in question is 1891: T. L. Peacock, *The Misfortunes Of Elphin* (London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1891).
[198] R. B. Johnson 'Thomas Love Peacock, Satirist', *Novel Review* 1(5) (1892), 406-415 (p. 413).
[199] 'New Books And Reprints'. *Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science And Art* 26th March 1892, 374.

> substantially correct form, without troubling themselves about the niceties and difficulties of the original text.[200]

These concerns were addressed by John Rhŷs and J. G. Evans when they published their own *Mabinogion*. This was a diplomatic edition of the prose tales from *Llyfr Coch*, provided without translation, in 1887. Their purpose was to present an affordable and accurate replication of the Middle Welsh text for students and scholars to 'meet the requirements of a more exacting age.'[201] Significantly, they chose *not* to include HT, explaining:

> The so-called *History of Taliessin*… is not published in this volume, because it has no claim to rank with the Mabinogion and other tales of the same epoch. We have, on the other hand, inserted as an appendix a version of the Triads, Mythical and Historical, because they throw light on the contents of the rest of the volume.[202]

Unlike current scholars, who may separate HT from the *Mabinogion* based on manuscript tradition, Rhŷs and Evans excluded it for other reasons. If the Triads 'throw light' on the tales from *Llyfr Coch*, Rhŷs and Evans must believe HT lacks similar explanatory value. Their other rationale—that it is of another epoch—would remind readers it is a later composition. As regard for medieval texts scales with perceived antiquity, this implication could only be negative. The ramifications of HT's exclusion from Rhŷs and Evans' *Mabinogion* may well have had a ripple effect, marking a significant point in the evolution of the term 'mabinogi' from a general word for 'Welsh tale' to a more restrictive appellation. Anyone wanting to study HT in the original Welsh would have to rely on Guest's early editions, CQ, or manuscripts; all of these were challenging to access. By contrast, Rhŷs and Evans' *Mabinogion* was accessible, user-friendly, and met the latest expectations of scholarship.[203] By comparison, HT's extant treatments were riddled with issues. These problems likely dissuaded scholars from studying it in detail, resulting in fewer publications about it.

To his credit, Rhŷs gave serious consideration to HT in two works which followed his and Evans' *Mabinogion*. In *Lectures On The Origin And Growth Of*

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[200] 'The Mabinogion', *Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science And Art* 2nd November 1878, 567-569 (p. 567).
[201] J. G. Evans and J. Rhŷs, *The Text Of The Mabinogion And Other Welsh Tales From The Red Book Of Hergest* (Oxford: J. G. Evans, 1887), p. viii.
[202] Evans and Rhŷs, *The Mabinogion*, p. viii.
[203] *The Saturday Review* pronounced that it was 'absolutely faithful'. 'Some Recent Works On Celtic Literature', *The Saturday Review* 30th July 1887, 160-161 (p. 160).

*Religion As Illustrated By Celtic Heathendom* (1888), Rhŷs modeled his fifth lecture, 'The Sun Hero', after the work of Sanskrit scholar Max Müller.[204] Müller, through his work on Vedic texts, had developed and popularized a theory which connected mythological figures with solar worship. Rhŷs, noting that the weir episode takes place at the beginning of May, surmises it 'must, according to Celtic ideas, have been the right season for the birth of the summer Sun-god'.[205] He was either unaware or unwilling to acknowledge that the much-maligned Edward Davies had already identified Taliesin as a solar deity in 1809.[206] Rhŷs, like Davies, emphasizes the Gwion strand, but where Davies drew parallels primarily with Classical deities, Rhŷs emphasizes Irish connections. He, like Borrow, notes the parallels between the tales of Gwion and Finn, considering whether Gwion's name might derive from Welsh *gwyn* 'white', cognate with Old Irish *finn*.[207] Taking Taliesin's name as a compound, he also determines 'the second part should be treated as *essin* or *eisin*, which I would equate with the name of the great mythic poet of the Goidels, Ossín' (Finn's son).[208] Oisín is not only a poet, but a warrior, and likewise 'Taliessin pretended to have been not only a poet or prophet, but also a warrior engaged in various important expeditions to the other world', as evidenced by poems such as '*Preideu Annwfyn*'.[209] Having already identified Finn and Oisín as sun heroes, Rhŷs takes these connections as sufficient grounds on which to affirm a solar-based Taliesin.

Rhŷs also compares Afagddu with the Irish tale of Amorgen. In it the blacksmith Eccet has two children, the hideous Amorgen and a beautiful daughter (cf. Afagddu and his sister, Creirwy). Amorgen is tiny and mute until aged fourteen, when he upsets the poet Aitherne by speaking for the first time. Rhŷs contrasts Amorgen's delayed speech and stunted growth with Taliesin's ability to speak from infancy.[210] Aitherne takes Amorgen's utterances as a threat and in the dead of night returns to kill him, but Eccet tricks him with an earthen simulacrum which Aitherne destroys instead. For this 'murder' Aitherne vows to pay a price, namely 'to educate a son of Eccet's until he should be equal to the poet'.[211] Through this contrivance, Amorgen becomes chief poet

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[204] A. H. Rüdiger, 'Writing Britain's Celtic History in the Nineteenth Century: The Study of Folk Tradition by Sir John Rhŷs', *Studia Celto-Slavica* 10 (2019), 77–110 (p. 83).
[205] J. Rhŷs, *Lectures On The Origin And Growth Of Religion As Illustrated By Celtic Heathendom* (London and Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1888), p. 546.
[206] Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, p. 200.
[207] Rhŷs, *Lectures*, pp. 552, 560.
[208] Ibid, p. 551.
[209] Ibid, p. 559.
[210] Ibid, p. 566.
[211] Ibid, p. 564.

of Ulster. Rhŷs thus presents him as a counterpart to Afagddu whose 'intellectual endowment' goes uninterrupted.[212] Afagddu, Rhŷs concludes, is the dark counterpart to a solar figure, just as Davies had determined in *Mythology And Rites*.[213]

In *Studies In The Arthurian Legend* (1891), we find additional echoes of Müller and Davies, though Rhŷs has become more self-conscious regarding the former. As *Studies* expands upon *Lectures*, he explains that in consequence

> I have been obliged to continue the use of some of the terms of the Solar Myth Theory. They are so convenient; and whatever may eventually happen to that theory, nothing has yet been found exactly to take its place.[214]

Müller's comparative method was so convenient in fact, that in 1870 one crafty writer used it to 'prove' Müller himself was a sun god.[215] Regardless, Rhŷs added Ceridwen, her husband, and Gwyddno to his reconstruction of a pan-Celtic solar mythology. As had Davies, *Studies* contends that Tegid Foel is, like his son, a dark god. Based on the euhemeristic account of Taliesin recorded in the Iolo Manuscripts, he equates Gwyddno with Urien Rheged: both are from North Wales, act as Taliesin's patrons, and have sons named Elphin.[216] Urien is further identified with Uthr Pendragon, Bran the Blessed, and other avatars of Rhŷs' archetypal dark god: 'the reason why so many of the Taliessin poems were sung in honour of Urien, is that he was the special god of the bards under one or more of his names in the pagan period.'[217] By extension, he implies that Tegid Foel and Gwyddno are two aspects of one divinity, as had Davies. Much as Tegid's domain is (per Rhŷs' reading) *under* Bala Lake, so too is Gwyddno's domain mostly underwater per IG.[218] Rhŷs draws additional Arthurian parallels: Gwyddno, as owner of a weir, is the Fisher King; his magic hamper is a prototypical Holy Grail.[219] As another Holy Grail, Ceridwen's cauldron is central:

> All these cases connecting the sacred vessel or its contents with poetry and inspiration, point possibly back to some primitive drink brewed by the early Aryan… In Hellas the tripod, instead of bearing the weight of a

[212] Rhŷs, *Lectures*, p. 568.
[213] Ibid, p. 566. Cf. Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, pp. 204-205, 246.
[214] J. Rhŷs, *Studies In The Arthurian Legend*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), p. v.
[215] R. F. Littledale, 'The Oxford Solar Myth' in R. Y. Tyrrell and E. Sullivan (eds), *Echoes From Kottabos* (London: E. Grant Richards, 1906), pp. 279-290. Littledale originally published the anonymously under the same title in *Kottabos* 5 (1870), 145-154.
[216] Rhŷs, *Studies*, p. 264. Cf. the anecdote from the *Iolo Manuscripts* discussed in Part 2, p. 28.
[217] Rhŷs, *Studies*, p. 261.
[218] Ibid, p. 263. Cf. Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, pp. 195-198, 206-207, and 244-246.
[219] Rhŷs, *Studies*, pp. 316-317. Gwyddno's hamper, one of the Thirteen Treasures of the Island of Britain, is a quest item in 'Culhwch Ac Olwen'.

> cauldron… had seated on it the medium in person, and she was supposed to give her responses according as the invisible influence of the divinity prompted her. The Celtic treatment being more primitive, the cauldron remained, and one may presume that it required the services of a druid as its interpreter.[220]

This abundance of parallels undermines Rhŷs and Evans' earlier implication that HT had no explanatory value for the rest of the *Mabinogion*. Gwyddno's hamper and Gwion the Cat-eyed appear in 'Culhwch'; the protagonist of 'Iarlles Y Ffynnawn' is Urien's son; 'Peredur' features both a Fisher King and a pseudo-Grail procession.[221]

Rhŷs also contradicted HT's epoch-based exclusion from his and Evans' *Mabinogion*. *Lectures* dismisses the authorship and date of the Taliesin sources as irrelevant:

> For our purpose it matters little what man or how many men wrote them, or even when they were written; for they contain an element of thought which clearly belongs to an ancient order of things.[222]

Ironically, he plows forward with a historical, six-century theory:

> many of them [Taliesin's poems] imply an antagonistic school of poets, which Taliessin is represented relentlessly attacking. This may be supposed to have been a more Christian school than that to which he is made to belong… everything suggests that the poets favoured by Maelgwn and his court were likely to be less pagan in the tone of their teaching than those can possibly have been who appropriated the name of Taliessin[.][223]

This supposition reflects the 1852 *Quarterly Review* article's view of Taliesin's poetry as a transition point between paganism and Christianity. Rhŷs believes there is sufficient historical evidence to state that this conflict between Christian poets and 'semi-pagan bards of the Taliessin school' went on until at least the fourteenth century.[224] Against whatever charge might be drawn up by a Christian poet, bards of this school would

> retaliate, in the assumed person of Taliessin, by charging the others with gross ignorance of the mysteries of bardism. Thus Taliessin now and

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[220] Rhŷs, *Studies*, pp. 326-327.
[221] Cf. C. Guest, *The Mabinogion* vol. 1 (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans; Llandovery: W. Rees, 1849), pp. 308-309, 312-313, and 377.
[222] Rhŷs, *Lectures*, pp. 546-547.
[223] Ibid, p. 547.
[224] Ibid, p. 548.

> then propounds to them and to the monks long lists of questions, mostly of an impossible and unanswerable kind, but all asserted to lie within the limits of his personal knowledge; for he has gone through all sorts of transformations, and has in some form or other assisted at all the great events through which the world has passed since its beginning. He challenges them also to prophesy to their patron, thereby intending them to fathom their inferiority to him, who can tell all that is to happen till the end of the world.[225]

Taking Taliesin's Elphin-strand satire and suggesting that it represents a widely practiced custom again echoes Davies' approach. Equally, the identification of Taliesin with a god and the view that Taliesin's poetry represents contention between Christianity and paganism together anticipate the theories to be developed in the twentieth century by Ifor Williams.[226]

The year 1897 saw the last meaningful treatments HT received during the century. That year, ME and *Rhododaphne* were published together in an illustrated edition.[227] This was well-advertised but commentary remained the same as in previous years.[228] R. G. Davies published a new translation of *The Sleeping Bard*: like Borrow he included a few explanatory footnotes but did not directly name HT as the source tradition.[229] Finally Alfred Nutt, with Kuno Meyer as editor, released the second volume of *The Voyage Of Bran*.[230] Like Rhŷs' *Lectures* and *Studies*, *Bran* was an attempt at mythological reconstruction. Rather than assuming a particular origin as per Müller, Nutt treated myths like fossils which could be dug up and studied. By comparing myths with each other, patterns could be established and mythological strata reconstructed.[231]

In *Bran*, Nutt brings together evidence relating to early Celtic belief in metempsychosis. His, according to Juliette Wood, is the first academic argument supporting the theory, though the idea 'had been around for a long time among pseudo-

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[225] Rhŷs, *Lectures*, p. 548.
[226] See Part 1, p. 13.
[227] T. L. Peacock, *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhododaphne* (London: Macmillian and Co Limited, 1897).
[228] See, for example, 'Advertisment', *The Athenaeum* 27 February 1897, 269; W. Canton, 'Bits About Books', *Good Words* January 1897, 429-433 (p. 432); C. L. Hind (ed) 'From Crowded Shelves', *The Academy* 13 March 1897, 301-302; C. L. Hind (ed) 'Notes And News', *The Academy* 6 February 1897, 181-182; 'Literary Gossip', *The Athenaeum* 16 October 1897, 529; 'This Week's Books', *The Saturday Review* 6 March 1897, 256.
[229] He did, on the other hand, correct Borrow's mistaken date for Wynne's original publication (1703, not Borrow's estimate of 1720) and tells readers that Wynne came from Meirionydd (cf. Peacock and Pughe). He cited the *Iolo Manuscripts*, which was probably the source for his claim that Taliesin served as a bard to not only Maelgwn and Urien, but also to King Arthur. See Davies, *Sleeping Bard*, pp. xv-xvii and 127.
[230] The first volume, which does not consider HT, appeared in 1895.
[231] J. Wood, 'The Rôle of Alfred Nutt as Publisher and Scholar', *Folklore* 110 (1999), 3-12 (pp. 4-5).

Druid writers' (and had been denounced by Nash).[232] Nutt, unlike Rhŷs, embraces the question of HT's date:

> Its existing form cannot be traced farther back than the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century; but its component elements are of immeasurably greater antiquity, as I hope to show beyond possibility of doubt.[233]

Comparing the Gwion strand to related poems from LT, Nutt concludes that a subset of poems presuppose HT, and as a result HT must have existed in some form prior to their composition. He estimates it originates in the fourteenth century in its extant form.[234] However, given Irish parallels, he contemplates that its basic elements may be older still:

> As for the substance of the tale, we may either look upon it as a Welsh adaptation, fitted into the national history, of an Irish romance, in which case it is not likely to be younger than the twelfth century, after which date Irish literature does not seem to have affected Wales… or, again, as belonging to a fund of mythic romance common to both Goidels and Brythons. There is much that speaks in favour of the second hypothesis — indeed of all the products of Welsh romance the *Hanes Taliessin* is the one that testifies most strongly to community of mythic tradition between the race to which it is due and the Goidels of Ireland.[235]

Here, Nutt refers to Rhŷs' connections between Taliesin, Oisín, Gwion, and Finn. He admits that 'the details are so different that it is entirely out of the question to regard the Taliessin birth-story as a possible loan from the Finn cycle' but suggests that a common source lies further back in time.[236] Though his methods differ from Rhŷs, Nutt's exploration of parallels and quest for origins likewise imply the existence of a pan-Celtic mythological superstructure.[237]

In sum, the second half of the nineteenth century was a period of significant departure from HT's early reception. Though it began with scholarly skepticism which reminds us of early supernatural aversion, scholars like Nash confronted, rather than avoided, mystical elements and theories. After a long delay, new editions of Guest and Peacock renewed access to their work for the general public. Skene, Rhŷs, and Evans

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[232] Wood, 'Alfred Nutt', p. 7.
[233] A. Nutt and K. Meyer, *The Voyage Of Bran* vol 2 (London: David Nutt, 1897), p. 84.
[234] Nutt and Meyer, *Bran* vol 2, pp. 85-87.
[235] Ibid, p. 87.
[236] Ibid, p. 88.
[237] Ab Ithel had likewise posited such a superstructure in 1862. See Ab Ithel, *Barddas*, p. xxiv.

met growing demands for academic treatments of Welsh literature but excluded HT to the determinant of its reputation. As the century neared its end, Rhŷs unwittingly echoed Davies' and Ab Ithel's cosmological interpretations of HT through the application of Müller's controversial solar myth theory. Nutt, taking a different approach, enlisted HT in his attempts to reconstruct older strata of Celtic mythology. Even though their emphases differed, his and Rhŷs' comparisons between mythological characters closely corresponded. Skepticism gave way to mythmaking, and Gwion eclipsed Elphin.

## Conclusion

In his introductory summary to the literature of Wales, Skene said that 'the most important document which issued from [Iolo Morganwg], and which has exercised the greatest influence on the popular views of Welsh literature, was the prose tale or Mabinogi, termed *Hanes Taliesin*.'[238] Arnold called it 'famous' two years earlier.[239] Examining the evidence, I contend that both scholars overestimated the tale's reception and influence. It is true HT found a place within academic discourse. However, most of these treatments were either brief (Evans, Jones, Parry), noncommittal (Stephens), or employed questionable methodology (Davies, Ab Ithel, Rhŷs). Nash and Nutt published analyses which met the highest standards of their day but resulted in opposite conclusions. Pughe's translation saw few readers on account of the termination of CQ and his subsequent death. Guest's *Mabinogion* and Peacock's ME, as stories rather than essays, were best equipped to attract general readers, but both became nearly impossible to acquire until the mid-1870s. The allusion to HT in *The Sleeping Bard* was colorful but constituted only a minor part of the novel. Even if we restrict ourselves to the debate regarding Druidic belief in metempsychosis, only the Gwion strand can be credited with playing an important role. The Elphin strand's poems were admittedly studied throughout the century, but the narrative of the strand became an afterthought. Given this history, Skene's and Arnold's perceptions are difficult to accept.

In my introduction, I suggested that the reception of the nineteenth century could inform HT's current reception. I will now set out three theories which build on the collected evidence to address this hypothesis. The first concerns Rhŷs and Evans' *Mabinogion*. The second deals with preferences which impact media consumption. The last considers developments during the period in which the Gwion strand became dominant. To address the first, I believe HT's exclusion from Rhŷs and Evans' *Mabinogion* was a key moment that discouraged new translations in later years. Twentieth-century translators could have followed Guest's lead and included HT, but excepting Patrick Ford all followed Rhŷs and Evans instead. Even if the precedent set by Rhŷs and Evans did not directly influence this exclusion, what began as an incident soon became a pattern. Once two or three scholars had decided to leave HT out of their editions of *The Mabinogion*, its exclusion became the norm. That norm resulted in a 128-year gap between Guest's and Ford's translations.

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[238] Skene, *Four Ancient Books*, p. 28.
[239] Arnold, 'The Study Of Celtic Literature', p. 477.

Cultural and individual preferences are another factor, and preference for genre in particular. A reader of Peacock, for instance, is unlikely to peruse a medievalist essay. A student of Celtic Studies might read Sioned Davies's *Mabinogion* (categorizing it as 'modern scholarship') but avoid Charlotte Guest (considering it 'Victorian'). HT does not fit neatly into most genres either, being something of a composite: readers who enjoy the fantastical Gwion strand might not enjoy the machinations in Elphin, and those who prefer prose might not appreciate the poetry. Furthermore, enthusiasts of Celtic literature (to pick one relevant genre) frequently favor more ancient material. This preference often derives from an interest in origins. When a text is much more recent than its presumed roots, then to satisfy this preference either the text must be dismissed or the temporal distance accounted for. We see this happening in our evidence: Rhŷs waved off HT's date as unimportant, Nutt argued it is centuries older than its manuscripts, and Skene implied it is an eighteenth-century fabrication. Though origins are no longer the be-all and end-all of scholarship, their allure remains powerful. Thus a combination of HT's unusual amalgamation of elements and the date of its manuscripts can dissuade people from engaging with it due to common preferences.

When the Gwion strand achieved prominence, it was consistently coopted into attempts to reconstruct ancient belief systems. Bringing together the conclusions of men like Davies, Ab Ithel, Rhŷs, and Nutt creates—to borrow Nash's phrasing—a 'wonderful confusion' of hypotheses involving deities and doctrines from across time, space, and philosophies. Many of these ideas went on to inspire scholars and creatives decades or centuries later. Robert Graves, for example, wrote that Davies provided him with the 'key' to Celtic religion, resulting in his 1948 *White Goddess*.[240] Similarly, the solar myth theory devised by Müller and applied to Celtic myths by Rhŷs continued to influence Celtic studies. Hence O'Rahilly, in 1946, took a statement from Saint Patrick's *Confessio* as proof of Irish pagan sun worship.[241] In the same way, the emphasis on the Gwion strand in the latter half of the nineteenth century anticipated recent work. Juliette Wood observed in 1981 that critical attention tended to focus on

[240] R. P. Graves, *Robert Graves And The White Goddess: 1940-85* (London: Phoenix, 1998), p. 76. Graves discusses HT in his work and also drew on Nash's translations. Mary-Ann Constantine provides a useful case study of Graves' sources, influence, and reception via the LT poem 'Cat Goddau' in M. Constantine, 'The Battle For "The Battle Of The Trees"', in *Graves And The Goddess: Essays On Robert Graves' The White Goddess*, ed. by I. Firla and G. Lindop (Selinsgrove: Sesquehanna University Press, 2003), pp. 40-51.

[241] T. F. O'Rahilly, *Early Irish History And Mythology* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1946), p. 470.

the Gwion strand.[242] The strand also turns up in Celtic 'New Age' works, such as John Matthews' *Taliesin: The Last Celtic Shaman* (2002) and *Spirit of the Celtic Gods and Goddesses* by Carl Colman and Kathryn Hinds (2020).[243] In 2012, Kristoffer Hughes, writing about the magical transformations in the Taliesin material from the perspective of modern Druidism, hoped 'to bridge the gulf between academia and the visionary'.[244] In such recent contributions, the Elphin strand is frequently skimmed over, cherry-picked, or ignored.

In 1824, Parry observed:

> Taliesin has, from time immemorial, enjoyed amongst his countrymen the title of 'Chief of the Bards;' and, while the language of the Cymry continues to be cultivated, this traditional honour will still accompany his name. But may it be said of Taliesin, in a few words, that he has been more praised than read, more read than understood.[245]

These words still resonate today. Taliesin is 'more praised than read' in the sense that his name often appears in popular culture unaccompanied by traditional material. He is 'more read than understood' in many senses, but his appearances in fantasy novels and New Age works has added an extra degree of complexity to that statement. In terms of scholarship, meaningful contributions have been made to the study of HT but much remains colored by reception from well over a century ago. If Ceridwen's cauldron brewed for a year before Gwion acquired its inspiration, how long will it take for scholars to transform their approach to HT, imbibe both strands, and gain new insights of their own?

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[242] Wood 'The Elphin Section Of *Hanes Taliesin*', p. 229.
[243] J. Matthews (2002) *Taliesin: The Last Celtic Shaman* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions); C. McColman and K. Hinds *The Spirit of the Celtic Gods and Goddesses: Their History, Magical Power, And Healing Energies* (Newburyport, MA: Red Wheel/Weiser, LLC, 2020), pp. 93-101 and 180-183. Both books feature Gwion and Ceridwen prominently but barely acknowledge Elphin or Maelgwn.
[244] K. Hughes, 'Magical Transformation In The Book Of Taliesin And The Spoils Of Annwn', *Mt Haemus Lectures*, 2012. <https://druidry.org/resources/the-thirteenth-mt-haemus-lecture-magical-transformation-in-the-book-of-taliesin-and-the-spoils-of-annwn> [Accessed: 1 March 2023].
[245] Parry, *Cambrian Plutarch*, p. 54.

## Appendix I: Chronological List of Reception Sources Through 1900

The following list is rearranged in chronological order from the same primary sources listed in the bibliography. Where multiple sources exist for a single year, these are ordered alphabetically by author (or by title where the author is unknown). Additionally, brief notes on contents as they relate to HT are included for each source, sometimes with direct quotes. Quotes used in the body of this essay are not repeated. Where possible, I have included links to digitized versions of these sources. While links to a number of journal articles and books are freely accessible, articles linked via ProQuest require an account or institutional credentials to view or download.

### *Publications Pre-1820*

Evans, E. (1764) *Some Specimens Of The Poetry Of The Antient Welsh Bards*. London: R. and J. Dodsley. <https://archive.org/details/somespecimensofp00evan/page/52/mode/2up?q=Elphin> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Summarizes the Elphin strand (pp. 52-54).
2. References the inundation of Gwaelod (p. 52).
3. Translates ‘Dyhuddiant Elphin’ (pp. 56-57).
4. Does not mention the Gwion Bach strand nor any magical elements.

Pennant, T. (1781) *A Tour In Wales II: A Journey To Snowdon*. London: Henry Hughes. <https://archive.org/details/b30416450_0002> [Accessed: 29 January 2023].

1. Popular travelogue which (erroneously) associates a lake—Llyn Geirionydd—with HT (p. 147).
2. Includes only a summary of the weir episode and a translation of ‘Dyhuddiant Elphin’ (pp. 147-150).

Jones, E. (1794) *Musical And Poetical Relicks Of The Welsh Bards*. London. <https://archive.org/details/musicalandpoeti00jonegoog/page/n28/mode/2up> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Briefly summarizes the Elphin strand only (p. 18).

Jones, E. (1802) *The Bardic Museum*. London: A. Strahan. <https://archive.org/details/The_Bardic_Museum/page/n39/mode/2up> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Summarizes the Elphin strand in more detail than previously available in English (pp. 19-20).
2. Mentions but dismisses the Gwion Bach strand as excessively romantic (p. 19).
3. Provides much less detail regarding the magical elements of the Elphin strand compared to the rest of the summary (p. 19).

Owen Pughe, W. (1803) *The Cambrian Biography*. London: E. Williams. <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=WGBIAAAAYAAJ&pg=GBS.PP2&hl=en> [Accessed: 23 December 2022].

1. Includes entries on numerous characters from HT, notably: Ceridwen, Elphin, Gwion Bach, Gwyddno Garanhir, Heinin the Bard, Maelgwn Gwynedd, Seithenyn, and Taliesin (pp. 73, 112, 162, 170-171, 177, 236, 314-315, and 321, respectively).
2. 'Cyridwen, a female personage in the mythology of the Britons, considered the first of woman kind, having nearly the same attributes with Venus, in whom is personified the generative powers. Pair Cyridwen, which may be rendered Cauldron of Renovation, is very often alluded to by our old poets.' (p. 73)

Davies, E. (1804) *Celtic Researches*. London: J. Booth. <https://archive.org/details/dli.granth.15113> [Accessed: 20 January 2023].

1. Though it has no bearing on HT specifically, it confirms that Davies knew Evan Evans' *Specimens*.

Meyrick, S. R. (1808) *The History And Antiquities Of The County Of Cardigan*. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orm. <https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/zLZCAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1> [Accessed 7 January 2023].

1. Detailed information regarding IG (pp. 51-52, 72-80).
2. Includes a number of HT-related poems both in Welsh and in Translation (pp. 51-55, 63-72, 77-78).
3. Summarizes the Elphin strand, especially focusing on the weir scene (pp. 62-63, 67).

Davies, E. (1809) *The Mythology And Rites Of The British Druids*. London: J. Booth. <https://archive.org/details/cu31924029164824> [Accessed 4 November 2022].

1. Provides several chapters analyzing HT as an example of 'universal pagan heresies', particularly the Helio-Arkite (pp. 183-290).[246]

Peacock, T. L. (1816) *Headlong Hall* 2nd ed. London: T. Hookham. <https://archive.org/details/headlonghallbyt00peacgoog> [Accessed: 1 January 2023].

1. Peacock's first and most successful novel.
2. The Welsh setting includes a description of William Madock's embankment, which likely inspired the rotten embankment in *The Misfortunes Of Elphin* (pp. 98-99).

***1820-1829***

Parry, J. H. (1824) *The Cambrian Plutarch*. London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall. <https://books.google.ie/books?id=NNMBAAAAMAAJ> [Accessed: 29 January 2023].

1. Incorporates parts of the Elphin stand into a brief biography of the historical Taliesin.
2. Attempts to rationalize aspects of HT and fit them together with other historical and literary traditions regarding Taliesin.

Prichard, T. (1824) *Welsh Minstrelsey: Containing The Land Beneath The Sea, Or, Cantrev Y Gwaelod*. London: John and H.L. Hunt. <https://archive.org/details/welshminstrelsy00pricgoog/page/n16/mode/2up?view=theater> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Summarizes much of the available information regarding IG, largely through quotes from earlier writers such as Meyrick.
2. Provides Prichard's adaptation of the IG legend in English verse.

[246] Cf. Butler, 'Druids', pp. 66-67.

‘Art. IX.-*The Misfortunes of Elphin*’. *Westminster Review* 10 (1829), 428-435. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8185777/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Review of Peacock’s ME in the year of its original publication.
2. Very briefly synopsizes the HT portion of ME; by contrast over two pages are dedicated to Seithenyn/IG.

‘Monthly View Of New Publications, Music, The English And Foreign Drama, The Fine Arts, Literary And Scientific Intelligence, &c.’, *La Belle Assemblée: Or, Bell’s Court And Fashionable Magazine Addressed Particularly To The Ladies* 53 (1829), 214-226. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2679001/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Review of Peacock’s ME in the year of its original publication.
2. ME is 'a very delightful sport' of a similar character to *Maid Marion* (p. 214).
3. ‘It is a tale of ancient Britain, during the days of the great King Arthur; a tale in which Taliesin, the illustrious bard of the radiant brow, figures as one of the principal *dramatis personae*. Light, lively, and terse, in style, it exhibits some curious traits of the “olden time;” combining, with antique fable, no slight portion of quaint, quiet satire’ (p. 214).
4. Summarizes and quotes from only the Seithenyn/IG chapters only.

‘Novels By The Author of *Headlong Hall*’ *Monthly Magazine, Or, British Register* 7(40) (1829), 381-392. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/4548952/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Review of Peacock’s ME in the year of its original publication.
2. Gives us a sense of how Peacock’s work had been received by the public up to this point in time: ‘though his works have been ushered into public life in a homely, unobtrusive sort of manner, without either puff, paragraph, or advertisement, to call attention to their characteristic excellencies, yet they have, nevertheless, grown upon the minds of their readers, force their way into general notice, and abundantly proved that they have within them the undoubted germ of perpetuity’ (p. 381).
3. The reviewer dwells on only the Arthurian Melvas section: Taliesin, the titular Elphin, and even the humorous Seithenyn, are not mentioned at all.

Peacock, T. L. (1829) *The Misfortunes Of Elphin*. London: Thomas Hookham. <https://archive.org/details/misfortuneselph02peacgoog> [Accessed 12 March 2022].

1. The original published version of Peacock's novel which adapts HT as its central narrative.
2. The first page of the digitized version provided through the link above is illegible. That page can be found here: <https://archive.org/details/misfortuneselph00peacgoog>

'*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*', *The Atheneaum And Literary Chronicle*, 6th May 1829, 276-278. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9171194/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Review of Peacock's ME in the year of its original publication.
2. Seithenyn/IG receive nearly an entire page of quotation; the state of Wales, Druidism, and the Melvas section receive a little under half a page together; the section pertaining to HT receives less than a paragraph: 'Elphin marries Angharad, daughter of Seithenyn, establishes a fishery, and one day catches, instead of a salmon, a boy, who turns out afterwards the famous Taliesin. The loves of Taliesin and Melanghel, the daughter of Elphin, the captivity of Elphin, and the exertion of Taliesin for his rescue, form the remainder of this small volume' (p. 278).

'*The Misfortunes Of Elphin*'. *The Cambrian Quarterly Magazine And Celtic Repository* 1(2) (1829), 231-240. <http://hdl.handle.net/10107/2070139> [Accessed: 23 October 2022].

1. Review of Peacock's ME in the year of its original publication.
2. ME is an 'ingenious publication, founded on the history, mythology, and romance of Cambria' (p. 231), which the reviewer appreciates for not only its entertainment value, but also for its scholarly adaptation of Welsh tradition.
3. Thought it gives some proper attention to the episode in which Elphin discovers Taliesin in the salmon weir, including a portion of Peacock's rendition of 'Dyhuddiant Elphin', Seithenyn/IG draws the bulk of attention.
4. Acknowledges HT explicitly as an important source for the novel.

‘*The Misfortunes of Elphin*’, *The Literary Gazette: A Weekly Journal Of Literature, Science, And The Fine Arts*, 7th March 1829, 153-155. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/5052850/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Review of Peacock’s ME in the year of its original publication.
2. The HT sections are barely mentioned.
3. Credits Peacock for ‘abstinence from elongation’ as ‘with the whole Cambrian mythology, romance, and history, or supposed history, at his beck, to have thus limited himself, is a rare example of virtuous self-denial, for which we take upon ourselves, in the name of the public, to express our warmest gratitude. The consequence has been, that instead of a prolix and tiresome compilation from the rubbish of antiquity, patched with the heterogeneous folly of modern invention, we have a playful and satirical *jeu d'esprit*’ (p. 153).
4. Focuses on the Seithenyn/IG section (pp. 153-4) followed by extracts from ‘The Education of Taliesin’ chapter (p. 155), neither of which are part of the HT proper.
5. ‘Yes, we must leave many pieces of pleasing poetry suggested by the ancient bards; we must leave the adventures of many British kings; we must leave Arthur and his court; we must leave the feastings of Yule, and other glorious feastings; we must even leave the resuscitated hero of them all, the bibacious Sethenyn, and all the laughable scenes in which he figures supreme,—to be enjoyed over the Misfortunes of Elphin’ (p. 155).

***1830-1839***

Idrison (Owen Pughe, W.) ‘The Mabinogi of Taliesin’ part 1, *The Cambrian Quarterly Magazine And Celtic Repository* 5(18) (1833), 198-213. <http://hdl.handle.net/10107/2119445> [Accessed: 3 April 2022].

1. First of two parts of the earliest complete English translation of HT.
2. The Middle Welsh is printed alongside the English translation in a two-column format.
3. Includes introductory remarks and occasional footnotes.

Idrison (Owen Pughe, W.) ‘The Mabinogi of Taliesin’ part 2, *The Cambrian Quarterly Magazine And Celtic Repository* 5(19) (1833), 366-382. <http://hdl.handle.net/10107/2119606> [Accessed: 30 July 2022].

1. Second of two parts of the earliest complete English translation of HT.
2. The Middle Welsh is printed alongside the English translation in a two-column format. Most of the poems are grouped together, instead of being interspersed throughout the narrative.
3. Includes some final remarks and occasional footnotes.

Parry, J. H. (1834) *The Cambrian Plutarch* (reprint). London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall. <https://books.google.ie/books?id=KycLAAAAYAAJ> [Accessed: 29 January 2023].

1. Reprint of the 1824 book (see above, under 1820-1829).

Aberystwyth, NLW MS 13248B <http://hdl.handle.net/10107/4686476> [Accessed: 23 February 2023].

1. Dyddgoviant William Owen [-Pughe], 1811-1835.
2. References to translating a LT poem (‘The Song Of The Wind’, see Appendix III) for Peacock (pp. 424-425).

***1840-1849***

Llewelyn, M. C. ‘Bardic Translations’ *Archaeologia Combrensis* 1(3) (1847), 274-6. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6695139/fulltext> [Accessed: 3 November 2022].

1. Translation of ‘Dyhuddiant Elphin’.
2. Includes a synopsis of the weir scene and a single sentence mentions Elphin’s imprisonment and rescue.

‘Advertisement’, *The Athenaeum* 21st July 1849, 733. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9272126/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Advertisement for Guest’s seventh volume of *The Mabinogion*, which includes HT.

2. ‘On July 31st will be published, price Eight Shillings, the Seventh and concluding Part of *The Mabinogion*, or Ancient Romances of Wales, from the Llyfr Coch o Hergest, and other Welsh MSS, with an English Translation and Notes, By Lady Charlotte Guest, Comprising the Dream of Maxen Wledig; the Tale of Lludd and Llevelys; The History of Taliesin; with Title-pages and an Introduction; completing the Work’ (p. 733).
3. The conclusion to Sir E. Bulwer Lytton's *King Arthur* poem also advertised on this page. While the advertisement for Guest's book is crammed in among a multitude of others, this one is printed in larger type with plenty of white space to draw the eye.

‘Advertisement’, *The Athenaeum* 28 July 1849, 758. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9252754/fulltext> [Accessed: 28 October 2022].

1. Advertisement for Guest’s seventh volume of *The Mabinogion*, which includes a translation of HT.
2. No detailed information.
3. Thomas Stephens’ *Literature Of The Kymry* (see below) is listed just above.

Guest, C. (1849) *The Mabinogion* vol. 3. London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans; Llandovery: W. Rhŷs. <https://archive.org/details/mabinogionfroml01mabigoog> [Accessed: 15 August 2022].

1. HT, provided in both Welsh and English, was the final story included in Guest’s multi-volume *Mabinogion*.
2. Translations for most of the poetry was taken directly from Owen Pughe’s translation (see above under 1830-1839).
3. The poems are integrated into the prose narrative.
4. Included two woodcut illustrations and copious notes.

‘*The Literature Of The Kymry* And *The Mabinogion, Part VII*’, *The Athenaeum* 17th November 1849, 1149-1151. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9262432/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Reviews both Charlotte Guest's final volume of *The Mabinogion* (see above) and Thomas Stephens' *Literature Of The Kymry* (see below).
2. Most of the review's comments on Guest are regarding HT:
    a. The story 'although of a later period, has traits of extreme antiquity in parts,—and an orientalism too, that is very striking. The successive transmigrations of Caridwen and Taliesin remind the reader and Lady Charlotte Guest remarks, of the adventures of the second Calendar in the "Arabian Nights"; and Taliesin's subsequent story, after he has been received as the foster-child of Elphin, also reminds us of eastern tales.'
    b. The reviewer goes on to summarize and quote portions from Rhun's attempt to disgrace Elphin's wife and Taliesin's overcoming Maegwn's bards.
3. The reviewer makes no comments about Stephen's extracts and commentary on HT, instead focusing on other aspects of the book.

Stephens, T. (1849) *The Literature Of The Kymry*. Llandovery: William Rees; London, Longman & Co. <https://archive.org/details/literaturekymry01stepgoog> [Accessed: 15 October 2022].

1. Summarizes and quotes parts of HT, including several of the poems.
2. Placement of the poems in relation to the narrative generally corresponds to Charlotte Guest's HT (see above).
3. Most commentary on HT is brief, with the exception of arguments refuting Edward Davies' Arkite theories (see under Publication Pre-1820).

'Welsh Literature: *The Mabinogion*, Part VII', *The Literary Gazette* 29th September 1849, 700-701. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/5143066/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Almost the entire article is quoting out of Guest's introduction; HT is listed as one of the included stories but there is no further commentary on it.

'Welsh Literature', *The Literary Gazette* 29th December 1849, 940-941. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/5146110/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Before setting out on their review, in regards to ancient Welsh literature, *The Literary Gazette* states 'Since Dr. Owen Pughe... we have been called upon to

review several publications on the subject' (p. 940): i.e., Pughe was the genesis of the journal's discussion of this type of material.

2. A section the review refers to Taliesin's satire on Maelgwn's bards, using it to illustrate Stephens' argument that 12th-century bards were morally 'no better than modern lawyers' (p. 941).

***1850-1859***

'Advertisement', *The Literary Gazette*, 11th May 1850, 336. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/5129285/fulltext> [Accessed: 28 October 2022].

1. Lists both the three and seven-volume editions of Guest's *Mabinogion*, under 'just published', with information on the physical format and pricing.

'Art I. 1. *Les Bardes Bretons: Poèmes Du Vie Siècle*, 2. *Cyclops Christianus*, 3. *Supplement For 1850 To The Archaeologia Cambrensis*', *The Quarterly Review* 91(182) (1852), 273-315. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2476743/fulltext> [Accessed: 1 October 2022].

1. Lengthy article referring to both strands of HT, but emphasizing the Gwion strand (pp. 296-298).
2. References to Guest, Pughe, and Stephens (pp. 276, 297).
3. Expresses skepticism regarding whether HT contains genuine remnants of Druidic doctrine.

Williams, J. (1854) *Gomer*. London: Hughes & Butler. <https://archive.org/details/gomerorbriefanal00will> [Accessed: 11 February 2023].

1. Minimal references to Taliesin; none specifically to HT.
2. Referred to by D. W. Nash in his *Taliesin* (1858).

Williams, J. (1854) *Gomer* 2nd part. London: Hughes & Butler. <https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/_/xz3bsqheIR8C> [Accessed: 11 February 2023].

1. Contains no references to Taliesin, but is directly quoted by Nash in his *Taliesin* (1858).

Nash, D. (1858) *Taliesin, Or, The Bards And Druids Of Britain*. London: John Russell Smith. <https://archive.org/details/taliesinorbards01nashgoog> [Accessed: 15 October 2022].

1. Discusses HT at length in its second and fourth chapters, alongside many poems related to HT (for which see Appendix III).
2. Tends to focus on arguing against the notion that fragments of genuine Druidic doctrine might be found within HT (particularly the Gwion strand) and in mythical poetry ascribed to Taliesin.
3. Is often disparaging of Edward Davies, William Owen Pughe, and Iolo Morganwg, while praising Lady Charlotte Guest and Thomas Stephens.

***1860-1869***

Borrow, G.H. (1860) *The Sleeping Bard*. London: John Murray. <https://archive.org/details/sleepingbardor00wynn> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Translation of a 1703 Welsh novel by Elis Wynne, which alludes to the Gwion strand in its second chapter (pp. 48-51).
2. A footnote by Borrow (p. 49) explains the connection to HT and compares Taliesin's acquisition of knowledge from Ceridwen's cauldron to both an Irish and a Norse tale.

'King Arthur And His Round Table', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 88(539), 311-337. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6599161/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Though de la Villemarqué only 'quotes fragments' he is given as the source for a Taliesin narrative that speaks 'of a magic bowl which contained the mysteries of the world' while Guest's HT goes unmentioned (p. 327; cf. Part 3, p. 36).

'Art II—*The Sleeping Bard*', *The Quarterly Review* 109(217) (1861), 38-63. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2480342/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Review of G. H. Borrow's 1860 translation of *The Sleeping Bard*, a novel in which Taliesin is adapted as a minor character into the second chapter (see above).

2. Ranks *The Mabinogion* and *The Sleeping Bard* as two of the most important pieces of prose to come out of Wales (pp. 55-56).

Ab Ithel, J.W. (1862) *Barddas* vol 1. Llandovery: D.J. Roderick; London: Longman & Co. <https://www.google.com/books/edition/Barddas_Or_a_Collection_of_Original_Docu/Lf37vQAACAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1> [Accessed: 4 November 2022].

1. Mostly consists of materials gathered from Iolo Morganwg's manuscript collection, edited by Ab Ithel. A second volume followed the first volume about ten years later, but only the first volume contains any references to HT.
2. ‘there are various allusions *to annwn, abred, manred, byd mawr, byd bach, pair Ceridwen*, the *Coelbren*, and many other particulars of a similar kind, which, while they are in themselves insufficient to constitute an intelligible groundwork on which to raise a superstructure such as our pages contain, bear strong testimony to the fact of its existence from the 16th up to the 6th century. The transmigration related by Taliesin is not identical in detail with that of Bardism, for in the latter the soul is not supposed to enter inanimate objects, such as a sword, a star, a word, a book, a boat, a shield, a tree, an axe, a grain of wheat, which form some of the gradations in “Cat Goddeu” and “Angar Cyvyndawd;” and we infer from this discrepancy that the Bardic doctrine was not directly founded on the poet's language. Still we may regard it as a valuable testimony to the actual existence among the Cymry, at the time when the poems were written, of a doctrine of metempsychosis,w hether believed in, or peresered merely as a matter of curiosity’ (p. xxiv).
3. ‘The Cauldron of Ceridwen' is one of several examples of cosmic features (in this case, a constellation) that the author alleges were recognized in Welsh bardic tradition.’ (404-5) Ab Ithel’s source is the ‘Hanes Taliesin’ of MAW (pp. 382, 403-404). Another, ‘Elffin’s Chair’ includes the following footnote: ‘Elffin is said to have first discovered Taliesin, in a leathern bag, fastened to one of the poles of a weir. He is frequently mentioned by the Bard’ (p. 404).
4. See also Part 3, p. 35-36.

‘*Popular Tales of the West Highlands, Orally Collected*’, *The Athenaeum*, 2nd August 1862, 142-143. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8874635/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. The reviewer claims that there is no obvious overlap between the *Mabinogion* tales and Taliesin tradition: ‘the Mabinogion class of story seems to have no points of contact with Taliesin and the Bardic literature’ (p. 142).

‘Cymric Literature In The Middle Ages’, *Dublin University Magazine* 63(375), 303-310. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6517593/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. While Guest, Thomas Stephens, and Thomas Price (Carnhuanawc) are all mentioned and praised for their contribution to contemporary understanding of medieval Welsh literature, the emphasis is entirely Arthurian (pp. 309-310).

Arnold, M. ‘The Study Of Celtic Literature’, *The Cornhill Magazine* 13(76) (1866), 469-483. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6587978/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Discusses Guest and Arnold, briefly mentioning *The Mabinogion* and HT and providing some sense of the scarcity of Guest’s work at this time.
2. See also Part 3, pp. 36 and 38.

‘Deaths’, *The Gentleman's Magazine And Historical Review 1* (1866), 438-456. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8709806/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. An obituary for Peacock, who died aged eighty, lists most of his literary works chronologically, including ME (though missing *Maid Marian*, oddly)
2. Peacock ‘spent the later years of his life among his books’ (p. 448).

‘Art. II—1. *Kennedy's Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*’, *London Quarterly Review* 31(61) (1862), 45-85. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2511750/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Says of Celtic literature that ‘The Ossianic Society has at last proved beyond question that the legends adapted by Macpherson to the taste of his day are the common property of the Gaelic race, that they exist in MSS. of undoubted antiquity. Lady Charlotte Guest has given us an opportunity of comparing the lore of the Cymri with that of the Gael. M. de Villemarqué and Emile Souvestre have gathered large stores of Breton tales written and unwritten. And from the Highlands, where, though the MSS. have probably almost disappeared, the

stories are still plentiful enough, Mr. J. F. Campbell has collected and arranged matter enough to employ the energies of a Celtic Grimm, if the Celtic race should ever produce such a useful and painstaking personage' (p. 47).

2. The reviewer is so incensed at the attitude taken by the 'anti-Celtic' Nash that he misrepresents Nash as claiming that the Welsh have no traditional romantic literature. 'Well may Nash ask, "Whence then comes the Mabinogion?" for there is romance enough in almost every page, as, for instance, in the tale of Taliesin, who, under the name of Gwion Bach, gains supernatural knowledge by unwittingly tasting three drops out of the magic cauldron that the witch has kept boiling for a year and a day' (p. 52).

Skene, W. F. (1868) *The Four Ancient Books Of Wales*. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas. <https://archive.org/details/fourancientbook04skengoog/> [Accessed: 3 November 2022].

1. A translation of much of the content of *Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin* (Aberystwyth, NLW Peniarth MS 1), *Llyfyr Aneirin* (NLW Llyfr Aneirin, Cardiff MS 2.81), *Llyfyr Taliesin*, and *Llyfyr Coch Hergest* (see Appendix II).
2. In his introduction, Skene implies that HT—or at least the manuscripts relied on by Pughe and Guest—may be a forgery by Iolo Morganwg (pp.

'*The Four Ancient Books Of Wales*', *Dublin University Magazine* 72(428) (1868), 226-240. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6633605/fulltext> [Accessed: 3 February 2023].

1. Review of Skene's *Four Ancient Books Of Wales* (1868).
2. Call's Skene's book an 'able and very valuable work' (p. 226).

'*The Four Ancient Books Of Wales*', *The North British Review* 49(97) (1868), 149-172. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/4270745/fulltext> [Accessed: 3 February 2023].

1. Review of Skene's *Four Ancient Books Of Wales* (1868).
2. Says that Skene 'holds the balance between undue doubt and undue acceptance, and the result is that he has placed the Welsh question on a solid basis, and thrown much light on many hitherto obscure points of history and ethnology' (p. 150).

‘Art II—*The Condition Of Englishwomen In The Middle Ages*’, *The British Quarterly Review* 50(99) (1869), 30-68. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6574315/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Lists Guest's *Mabinogion* as illustrating ‘the low station assigned to women’ in the Middle Ages in Britain.
2. In a list of examples arguing that there are no surviving poems in the 'collected remains of the bards' which praise a woman, the following is included: ‘...of Elphin, “who gave me wine, ale, mead, and the noble great steeds”—such are Taliessin's themes’ (p. 33).

‘Skene's *Four Ancient Books Of Wales*’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 15(57) (1869), 95-96. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6704424/fulltext> [Accessed: 3 February 2023].

1. Review of Skene’s *Four Ancient Books Of Wales* (1868).
2. Calls Skene’s book a ‘valuable work, one of the most important contributions to Celtic literature of the day’ (p. 95).

‘*The Four Ancient Books of Wales*’, *Westminster Review* 36, 1 (1869), 36-79. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8116421/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Suggests that the publication of MAW was accompanied by an expectation that the few scholars capable of interpreting Middle Welsh would comb its bardic poetry for information about historical events. Pughe’s ‘learning and thorough knowledge of the Welsh language point[ed] him out as the fitting person to undertake the translation’ but ‘Under Edward Williams's guidance Dr. Pughe could see nothing in the poems ascribed to Taliesin but Druidic lore. Dark and mysterious sentences, purporting to be translations from these poems, are scattered through the Welsh and English Dictionary of Dr. Pughe, which set at defiance alike common sense and ordinary critical judgement’ (p. 39).
2. Meanwhile, Nash's *Taliesin* (see 1858) ‘clearly proved that the authors of the poems [attributed to Taliesin] were Christian men, that no Druidic or other philosophy was to be found in them, and that the date of their composition could not, with few exceptions, be carried higher than the twelfth century’ (p. 40).

***1870-1879***

Littledale, R. F. 'The Oxford Solar Myth', *Kottabos* 5 (1870), 145-154.

1. No direct bearing on HT.
2. Criticizes Max Müller's solar myth theory, which was employed by Jon Rhŷs in 1888 and 1891 in relation to HT material.
3. Originally anonymous, it was republished with the author's name in *Echoes From Kottabos*. See R. F. Littledale, 'The Oxford Solar Myth' in *Echoes From Kottabos*, ed. by R. Y. Tyrrell and E. Sullivan (London: E. Grant Richards, 1906), pp. 279-290. <https://archive.org/details/echoesfromkottab00triniala> [Accessed: 27 February 2022].

Smith, G. B.[247] 'Thomas Love Peacock'. *Fortnightly Review* 14(80) (1873), 189-206. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6635024/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Of Peacock's novels, ME is 'one of the most pleasant which has proceeded from his pen' (p. 198).
2. Provides a fairly balanced summary which includes the main elements of HT within ME and also connects the story with Guest's HT translation in her *Mabinogion*.
3. ME's poems 'are imbued with more sublimity and tenderness than other poems of the author which may lay claim to be more entirely original in conception. The modern English seems at any rate to have caught the spirit of the old bards if the form of expression be wanting' (p. 200).
4. The majority of smith's commentary on ME consists of tongue-in-cheek rebuttals to Peacock's satire, suggesting that Smith is more concerned with the present than with the medieval traditions upon which ME is based.

Davies, J. 'Thomas Love Peacock'. *The Contemporary Review* 25 (1874), 733-762. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6635024/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. J. Davies provides a useful overview of the publishing history of Peacock's novels up to the end of 1874. Bentley's Standard Novels had ensured that

[247] George Barnett Smith would go on to write a biography of Peacock's friend Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1877.

*Headlong Hall*, *Crochet Castle*, *Nightmare Abbey*, and *Maid Marion* were available to the reading public beyond their original print runs (p. 733). *Melincourt*, originally published in 1818, finally saw a cheap reproduction in 1856. ME, however, following it's original print run of 750 copies in 1829 saw no reprintings until the *Collected Works*. Despite its long absence from the attention of printers, Davies tells us, 'it fetched a good price when found on the shelves of second-hand booksellers' (p. 734) and that it had been 'treasured by its fortunate possessors, quoted oracularly by those who could recollect its wit, humor, and satire, and referred to with a constant sense of its exceptional raciness' (p. 751).

2. Davies appreciates Peacock's depictions of nature in ME: 'Peacock has lavished his descriptive powers on the scenes and coast where he found his wife, and thrown peculiar life into the legend of the invasion of the sea upon the lowlands of Gwaelod, still retained in the "Welsh Proverbs," the "Mabinogion," and other records' (p. 751).
3. His synopsis of ME is quite balanced and gives fair attention to its HT elements, but his praise is directed to other aspects of the novel: 'the "Misfortunes of Elphin" represent a mine of good things for quotation, especially the chapters anent the drunkenness of Seithenyn and the education of Taliesin… it is doubtful whether parody or travesty ever hit the golden mean between joke and earnest, reason and unreason, more neatly than his [Seithenyn's] justification of the *status in quo* and deprecation of meddling with what had served its purpose hitherto' (p. 753).
4. Peacock's ME poems 'constitute at the same time the best collection we know of translations from and imitations of the Welsh bardic poetry, and the best title, along with the songs in "Maid Marion" and the other tales, of Peacock to a place among poets' (p. 754).

'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 6th March 1875, 314. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8917225/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Advertises two formats of expensive, out-of-print copies of Guest's three-volume *Mabinogion* (see Part 3, p. 36).

‘Advertisement’, *The Athenaeum* 9th October 1875, 461. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8936520/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Advertises two formats of expensive, out-of-print copies of Guest’s three-volume *Mabinogion* (see Part 3, p. 36).
2. Indicates that the copies advertised seven months earlier in the same periodical had not yet all sold.

‘Art V—*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*’, *The Edinburgh Review* 142(289) (1875), 110-143. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6489390/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Says that ME ‘abounds in wild and eloquent descriptions, and is gemmed with sparkling descriptive verse’ (p. 118).
2. Despite dedicating more than three pages of discussion to ME, Elphin himself is only mentioned in a sentence and Taliesin is not mentioned at all. The bulk of attention is to Seithenyn, the ‘Education Of Taliesin’ chapter, and Peacock’s verse.
3. ‘The quick-witted Cymri, with their strange blending of refined tastes and most barbarous practices, lend themselves admirably to Mr. Peacock's genius. The history of those times has been vaguely handed down in myth and tradition, but we can conceive that the picture, as Mr. Peacock presents it to us, is by no means over-fanciful, although somewhat sarcastically caricatured… [H]is lays of the bards are full of fire and spirit, and steeped in local and chronological colour. If the Welsh originals sung half as well as he, we may envy the petty tyrants who patronised them the music that enlivened their interminable feasts’ (p. 137).

Collins, M. ‘Thomas Love Peacock: Versifier And Humourist’, *The St. James's Magazine* 3(1), 600-610. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/5915653/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Peacock ‘never attempts flesh and blood, brain and heart. Some romancers paint impossible ideal men and women, who are men and women for all that. Peacock never attempted man or woman. He took a humour, and draped it, and set it in action’ (p. 600).

2. ME ‘is always likely to be the least read of Peacock's works, being full of Welsh triads and ballads, for which the ignorant Saxon has slight admiration. I fancy, however, that “The War Song of Dinas Vawr” is not precisely a translation from the ancient British tongue’ (p. 609).

G., E. W.[248] ‘Thomas Love Peacock’, *London Society: An Illustrated Magazine Of Light And Amusing Literature For The Hours Of Relaxation* 27(162) (1875), 496-509. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3797986/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Though acknowledging his wit and learning, the article is unusually harsh towards Peacock, suggesting his antagonism accounted for his works’ modest reception: ‘what is intrinsically good will never wholly lack readers, in spite of all their author did to make them unpopular’ (p. 497).
2. Despite Peacock's significant softening of any magical elements from his sources for ME, this critic still finds that ‘The names of the characters are so uncouth, and the record of their deeds so intensely and palpably mythical, that it is not easy to take much interest in them’ (p. 507).
3. Though both Arthurian and IG elements are mentioned, the HT proper is not.
4. ME ‘is the least-formed of all Peacock's stories. Indeed, it can hardly be said to be a connected romance at all. It was published in the novel form in order to give the author an opportunity of stringing together his translations of the Triads and other early Welsh poetry’ (p. 507).

G., R. ‘Thomas Love Peacock’, *The Examiner*, 30th January 1875, 134-135. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8708452/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. A monk who appears in the Melvas portion of ME is mentioned in passing in a short article focused on Peacock’s poetical pieces in his *Collected Works*.

Gosse, E. W. ‘*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*’, *The Academy*, 6th March 1875, 234-236. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8075442/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

[248] Probably E. W. Gosse; Cf. E. W. Gosse, ‘*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*’, *The Academy*, 6th March 1875, 234-236.

1. ME is ‘a very curious and learned effort to revive the early days of Welsh history, and introduce us to the epoch of Taliesin and the Triads. This is an especially able book, the verse plentifully scattered through it being in Mr. Peacock's happiest manner, and the adventures being humorously, as well as graphically described’ (p. 236).

‘Legends And Folk-Lore Of North Wales’, *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine* 118(721) (1875), 590-607. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6455130/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Considers IG and a small portion of the Elphin strand.
2. Attempts to synopsize surviving folk and medieval tradition in North Wales.
3. ‘Cymric professor of divination, the far-famed Taliesin’ (p. 596).
4. Illustrates Taliesin’s prophetic power by quoting one of HT’s Elphin strand poems and connecting it to Maelgwn’s death due to the Yellow Plague.[249]
5. Considers IG to be among legends worth preserving due to its ‘wider-reaching more strictly public moral and application’ (p. 600).
6. Though referencing Guest’s ‘costly’ text (cf. Part 3, pp. 36 and 40-41), the description of IG owes more to Peacock: ‘But the king was a bard, and a man, unfortunately, more given to his letters than to action: his son Elphin was too young to see, without the power to remedy, the tactics of a certain Seithenyn… the drunken custodian of the Dykes… “The Misfortunes of Elphin,” will be found to treat the whole legend… it is so subtly and drolly put, expounded with such pleasant home-thrusts, that we could wish every Lord of the Admiralty, every railway director, every sanitary commissioner, could be furnished with a pocket-copy, by way of a beacon-light against his own particular form of shipwreck’ (pp. 600-601).

‘*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*’, *The Athenaeum*, 9th January 1875, 49-50. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8943592/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Though this article does not mention ME, cf. Peacock’s inspiration by books and the Welsh landscape to this comment about another of his works: ‘His “Rhododaphne” is successful, mainly because its inspiration is derived from his

[249] Cf. Guest, *The Mabinogion* vol 3, p. 399.

favorite authors; so that it is the work of a fancy fed by books rather than by Nature' (p. 50).

'Thomas Love Peacock', *Temple Bar : A London Magazine For Town And Country Readers* 44 (1875), 113-124. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6423974/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. ME and *Maid Marian* mentioned briefly together as both being historical romances, but this reviewer finds that '"Maid Marian" is in some respects the author's happiest production. Through all the novels are scattered specimens of such songs as few people have known how to write as well as Peacock; in "Maid Marian" these songs are found in greater quantity and finer quality than anywhere else' (p. 120).

'Thomas Love Peacock', *The Examiner* 23rd January 1875, 105-107. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8697210/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. 'Yet, as the stones of an arch from which the keystone is withdrawn have been known in falling to arrange themselves into another arch, so the Peacockian comedy, crumbling to pieces for want of unity of action and discrimination of character, shaped itself into the Peacockian novel' (p. 105).
2. ME is 'a story unequal by reason of the inequality of the tradition to which the author has strictly adhered, but irresistibly amusing whereever it has allowed him to indulge his bent towards satire and broad comedy. The picturesque and the humorous have seldom been more felicitously blended than in the narrative of the inundation' (p. 106).
3. Other than ME's depiction of IG, has nothing to say about HT.

'*Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*', *The Saturday Review*, 20th February 1875, 252-253. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9633351/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. First article listed in the 'Reviews' section.
2. Regarding Peacock's limited reception, the article muses that 'It is strange that works of such varied merit and attractions as Peacock should have lapsed so much into obscurity as they have done; but it is not so strange that they should

be caviare [sic] to the general [public]. The general will brook the feeling that they themselves are covertly included in the ridicule which is openly directed at their fellows… They like moreover to be quite certain where jest ends and earnest begins in a book which is a mixture of both; and in the case of these novels one may suspect that the author himself could hardly have marked out the boundary line. Again, when a writer deals satirically with questions of moment, the greater part of his readers will like to know with which side of the question he sympathizes. Peacock very often sets up a disputant on either side, and lets each one express his views in extravagant fashion, and with equal success and weight' (p. 252).

3. 'The author's gift or skill as a song-writer is perhaps seen at its best in *The Misfortunes of Elphin* and in *Maid Marian*, two works which may be classed together as dealing with the past instead of the present, and revelling in an exuberant and poetical fancy, instead of keeping themes suggested by modern follies and abuses. *The Misfortunes of Elphin* does indeed contain a political allusion, but that is the only tiresome part of it' (p. 253).
4. Comments on ME's depictions of IG/Seithenyn and 'The War-Song Of Dinas Vawr'.
5. Not only is HT not mentioned; even the name 'Taliesin' does not appear in the article.

Hutton, J. 'The Last Of The British Bards', *Calcutta Review* 63(126) (1876), 355-364. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/5267653/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Acknowledges several categories to which scholars had assigned the poems ascribed to Taliesin (historical, mythological, theological, etc.).
2. Summarizes HT from the weir scene, and tells us that 'Taliesin achieves his [Elphin's] liberation by chanting some perfectly incomprehensible verses, aided by some utterly absurd miracles. At the same time it is quite clear that the so-called translations of these ancient British poems are for the more [sic] part mere guess-work, and at the best are so bald and literal that they miss the spirit, the point, and even the real meaning of the originals' (p. 360).

‘German Literature’, *Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science And Art*, 20th January 1877, 90-92. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9639128/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Compares Peacock’s ME to F. Spielhagen's novel *Sturmfluth* (p. 91); see Part 3, p. 37.

Guest, C. (1877) *The Mabinogion* 2nd ed. London: Bernard Quaritch. <https://archive.org/details/cu31924026877799> [Accessed 31 October 2022].

1. The second edition of Guest’s *Mabinogion*, discussed in Part 3, pp. 38 and 41.

‘The Mabinogion’, *Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science And Art* 2nd November 1878, 567-569. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9637983/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Review of the second edition of Guest’s *Mabinogion* (see 1877).
2. Discusses the evolution of scholarship and which of the *Mabinogion* tales were tending to receive the most attention (HT not among them). See Part 3, p. 41.

***1880-1889***

Evans, D. S. ‘Miscellanea’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis* fifth series 1(1) (1884), 75-79. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6735160/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 September 2022].

1. Critically refutes Skene’s claim that HT may be one of Iolo Morganwg’s forgeries (see Skene, 1868).
2. ‘In the collection of Welsh MSS. at Llanover, near Abergaveeny, is a MS. volume belonging to the latter part of the sixteenth or the early part of the seventeenth century, containing this very tale… in the hand-writing Llywelyn Sion, the Glamorgan poet… [who] died in 1616’ (p. 77).[250]

Saintsbury, G. ‘Thomas Love Peacock’, *Macmillan's Magazine* 53(318) (1886), 414-427. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6070700/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

[250] Cf. P. Ford, ‘A Fragment Of The Hanes Taliesin By Llewelyn Siôn’, *Études Celtiques* 14(2) (1975), 451-460.

1. Saintsbury, who would supply the introduction to the Macmillan Illustrated Standard Novels edition of *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhododaphne* (see Peacock, 1897) opines that ME is one of Peacock's best novels (p. 415).
2. 'the whole books is written in the spirit of "Candide"—a spirit and manner which Englishmen have generally been readier to relish, when they relish them at all, in another language than their own' (p. 420).
3. Peacock's themes 'he caresses with inexhaustible affection, but in a manner no doubt very puzzling, if not shocking, to matter-of-fact readers' (p. 421).
4. The rest of Saintsbury's discussion of ME is in praise of Seithenyn, who is 'by far Peacock's most original creation' (p. 421).

Oliphant, M. (1886) *Literary History Of England* vol 3. London: Macmillian & Co. <https://archive.org/details/dli.bengal.10689.2487> [Accessed 26 October 2022].

1. Peacock is discussed in Chapter V, wherein Oliphant remarks 'Of the many verses with which these eccentric stories are studded, we must quote a portion of one, which is to be found in the *Misfortunes of Elphin*, a Welsh romance of vague chronology, of the times of Arthur, which is told with admirable humour and mock gravity. The first lines of this *War Song of the Dinas Vawr* will be found, if they chance to strike the reader's ear and fancy, to be one of those utterances of genius which prove applicable to all the circumstances of life' (pp. 154-155).

Evans, J. G. and Rhŷs, J. (1887) *The Text Of The Mabinogion And Other Welsh Tales From The Red Book Of Hergest*. Oxford: J.G. Evans. <https://archive.org/details/textofmabinogion00evanuoft> [Accessed: 31 October 2022].

1. A diplomatic edition of the prose tales from *Llyfr Coch* (see Appendix II).
2. Though additional material such as the triads are provided, HT is excluded.
3. See also Part 3, pp. 41-42 and the Conclusion, p. 48.

'Peacock', *Temple Bar* 80 (1887), 35-52. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6557023/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Makes many observations about Peacock's popularity and tendencies as a writer generally: 'in few men has wit been found so wise, or wisdom so witty' (p. 52).

2. ‘Peacock wrote a good deal of verse, some of which is witty and amusing, but the greater part is verse and no more’, and as such ME’s ‘War-Song Of Dinas Vawr’ is ‘not poetry, but we read it with amusement’ (pp. 49-50).
3. *Maid Marion* and ME are ‘humorous representations of life, as it might have been, but never was, in Sherwood Forest and Wales’ (p. 36)
4. ME ‘was indeed written for the sake of the Welsh songs which are introduced into it; yet even here satire finds a place’ (pp. 36-37).

‘Some Recent Works On Celtic Literature’, *The Saturday Review* 30th July 1887, 160-161. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9481291/fulltext> [Accessed: 24 September 2022].

1. Reviews Evans’ and Rhŷs’ *Mabinogion* (see 1887).
2. Provides some examples of where Guest allegedly misread something or missed entire sections in her translation, then clarifies that ‘we have no wish to seem ungrateful for what was done by Lady Charlotte Guest. Her attempt was a spirited and patriotic one; but it belongs, as Professor Rhys says, “to the pre-scientific era.”’ (p. 160).

‘Advertisement’, The Athenaeum 29th December 1888, 870. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8998610/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Bentley & Son advertise Peacock's *Collected Works* for 31*s*. 6*d*., indicating it was still available over a decade after its publication (see Peacock, 1875).

Fletcher, C.R.L. ‘A Forgotten Corner Of England’, *Time* 19(47) (1888), 589-597. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6333816/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Quotes a verse from the Arthurian ‘The War-Song Of Dinas Vawr’ poem from Peacock’s ME in a discussion about Viking warfare (p. 593).

Rhŷs, J. (1888) *Lectures On The Origin And Growth Of Religion As Illustrated By Celtic Heathendom*. London and Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate. <https://archive.org/details/cu31924009524384> [Accessed: 4 November 2022].

1. Considers HT, primarily the Gwion strand, viewed through the lens of Max Müller’s solar myth theory and comparison to other Celtic stories and figures.

2. Cf. Rhŷs, *Studies*, 1891. See also Part 3, pp. 42-43.

***1890-1900***

‘Advertisement’, *The Athenaeum* 4th July 1891, 48. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9184730/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists an upcoming edition of ME (see Peacock, 1891).

‘Advertisement’, *The Athenaeum* 28th November 1891, 736. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9018233/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists an upcoming edition of ME (see Peacock, 1891).

Mew, J. ‘The Christian Hell’, *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review* 30(177) (1891), 712-734. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2658908/fulltext> [Accessed: 11 February 2023].

1. Mentions Borrow’s translation of Elis Wynne’s *The Sleeping Bard* (see 1860, 1897) briefly (p. 722).

Peacock, T. L. (1891) *The Misfortunes Of Elphin*. London: J. M. Dent & Co. <https://archive.org/details/cu31924013534148> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. New edition of ME edited by Richard Garnett.
2. The appendix contains selected poems from Guest’s *Mabinogion* which Garnett encourages readers to compare to the adaptations of those poems by Peacock.

Rhŷs, J. (1891) *Studies In The Arthurian Legend*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. <https://archive.org/details/studiesinarthur00rhysgoog> [Accessed 4 November 2022].

1. Expands on ideas from *Lectures* (see Rhys, 1888); in particular, more of the Gwion strand characters are brought into Rhys’ analysis.
2. See also Part 3, pp. 43-45.

‘Advertisement’, *The Academy* 17th December 1892, 576. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8376416/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the latest edition of ME (see Peacock, 1891).

‘Book Review’, *The Athenaeum* 21st May 1892, 665. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9012593/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Brief mention of latest edition of ME (see Peacock, 1891).

Johnson, R. B. ‘Thomas Love Peacock, Satirist’, *Novel Review* 1(5) (1892), 406-415. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6180677/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. ‘The tale of Taliesin—“The Radiant Brow”—is a stirring one, alike in the old direct narratives and in this humorous modernisation, but we must feel that Peacock’s greatest contribution to the matter is his kindly and spirited portrait of the “bibulous” Seithenyn’ (p. 413).

‘New Books And Reprints’. *Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science And Art* 26th March 1892, 374. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9508688/fulltext> [Accessed: 1 October 2022].

1. The new edition of ME edited by R. Garnett listed at the top of books and reprints (see Peacock, 1891).
2. Suggests that readers compare ME with Guest’s HT.
3. ‘*The Misfortunes of Elphin* (Dent & Co.), is introduced by some appropriate observations on the skillful union in the story of the bardic traditions of Taliesin and Elphin and the certain passages in the legendary history of Arthur that are independent of the author’s original object… Peacock’s delightful Welsh romance was written to introduce translations of ancient Welsh poems and triads. Undoubtedly the romance is greatly enriched by the scenes in which Melvas and Arthur figure… The greatest gain, however, is the reappearance of the immortal Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi, after his supposed drowning’ (p. 374).

‘New Books Of The Month’, *The Review Of Reviews* 5(29) (1892), 521-526. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3894601/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. ‘To us this volume seems one of the most disappointing of Peacock’s fictional works. Founded on a Welsh legend, slightly connected with the story of Arthur, “The Misfortunes of Elphin” lacks the necessary proportion… and does not give the opportunity for political satire of which its author can make such good use… Nor are the lyrics so beautiful as those to which we are accustomed; they are adapted from Welsh songs and ballads, and as such, of course, will prove of exceeding interest to natives of the Principality’ (p. 523).

‘Advertisement’, *The Bookman* 3(18) (1893), 195-196. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3037244/fulltext> [Accessed: 17 February 2022].

1. Advertisement for G. H. Borrow’s *The Sleeping Bard* (see Borrow, 1860).

Lines, H. H. ‘Dyganwy, Caer Llion, And Caer Seion’, *The Antiquary* 30 (1894), 263-270. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6668596/fulltext> [Accessed: 2 October 2022].

1. Deganwy, where Maelgwn Gwynedd holds court and imprisons Elphin in HT, is described in this article mainly from a historical and archaeological perspective. H. H. Lines reference Pughe regarding the Roman foundations of Deganwy, but neither Guest nor Pughe are referred to as sources for Lines’ synopsis of HT.
2. Lines suggests that HT has a basis in fact: ‘Maelgwn held his court there, and we find it the locale of a romance, probably founded on facts, concerning the captivity and liberation of Prince Elphin, related in the Mabinogion by Taliesin… there is no doubt of its giving a true portrait of the times to which it refers, and showing a thorough knowledge of the localities in which the romance is laid’ (p. 263).
3. The article also refers to a second imprisonment of Elphin. ‘He was liberated from this gloomy prison only to be incarcerated in another in the ‘land of Arthro,’ near Harlech, where, after a long search, I believe I traced the place of this second imprisonment on an almost inaccessible rock hidden from view in

the recesses of a forest' (p. 264). It is unclear where Lines came across this story of a second imprisonment of Elphin, but Arthro is mentioned in MAW.[251]

Hovey, R. '*Taliesin: A Masque*: First Movement', *Poet-Lore: A Monthly Magazine Of Letters* 8(1) (1896), 2-14. <https://www.google.com/books/edition/Taliesin/dMkCAAAAMAAJ> [Accessed: 27 February 2023].

1. The script of the first act of a verse play featuring Taliesin as its protagonist (see 1900 for full playscript).
2. Primarily based on Arthurian/Grail legends; the only clear allusion to HT is contained in a single early stanza (p. 2).

'Advertisment', *The Athenaeum* 27th February 1897, 269. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9210016 /fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock's *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).
2. 'Crown 8vo. cloth extra, antique paper, 3*s*. 6*d*.; "Peacock" Edition, gilt sides, back, and edges, 5*s*.' (p. 269).

'Advertisment', *The Athenaeum* 6th March 1897, 300. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9626077/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock's *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

Hind, C. L. (ed) 'Advertisement', *The Academy* 6th March 1897, 271. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8240565/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock's *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

[251] Jones et al., MAW vol 1, p. 44.

2. ‘*TIMES*—“The whole tale is eminently readable, and the story carries the reader quickly along, Mr. F. H. Townsend’s illustrations adding to the charm of a new edition that deserves to be thoroughly popular’ (p. 271).

Canton, W. ‘Bits About Books’, *Good Words* January 1897, 429-433. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3339314/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Provides a one-sentence review of the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock’s *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).
2. The book ‘for the literary student at least, has a peculiar interest of its own’ (p. 432).

Davies, R. G. (1897) *The Visions Of The Sleeping Bard, Being Ellis Wynne's ‘Gweledigaetheu Y Bardd Cwsc’*. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., Limited. <https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/O249AAAAYAA> [Accessed: 23 February 2023].

1. A new translation of the 1703 story by Elis Wynne, first translated by G. H. Borrow (see 1860).

Hind, C. L. (ed) ‘From Crowded Shelves’, *The Academy* 13th March 1897, 301-302. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8398753/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Briefly reviews the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock’s *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).
2. ‘It contains the magnificent drinker, Seithenyn, and the incomparable War Song of Dinas Vawr’ (p. 301).

Hind, C. L. (ed) ‘Notes And News’, *The Academy* 6th February 1897, 181-182. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8239729/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock’s *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

Hind, C. L. (ed) ‘New Books Received’, *The Academy* 27th February 1897, 268. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8200265/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock’s *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

Hind, C. L. (ed) ‘New Books Received’, *The Academy* 6th March 1897, 282. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/8303538/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock’s *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

‘List Of New Books’, *The Athenaeum* 27th February 1897, 278. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9210093/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock’s *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

‘Literary Gossip’, *The Athenaeum* 16th October 1897, 529. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9046070/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Several of Peacock’s books, including ME, are listed to be sold from the library of the late daughter of one of Percy Bysshe Shelley’s friends and biographers, Thomas Jefferson Hogg.

‘New Books Of The Month’, *The Bookman* 13(1) (1897), 25-27. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3120080/fulltext> [Accessed: 25 February 2023].

1. Lists the new translation Elis Wynne’s 1703 *The Sleeping Bard* by R. G. Davies (p. 26; see also Davies, R. G. above).

Nutt, A. and Meyer, K. (1897) *The Voyage Of Bran* vol 2. London: David Nutt. <https://archive.org/details/voyagebransonfe02cairgoog> [Accessed: 4 November 2022].

1. Considers HT's Gwion strand, particularly the theme of Celtic pagan belief in metempsychosis, through what were at the time the latest methodologies in comparative folklore.
2. See also Part 3, pp. 46-47.

'Our Library Table', *The Athenaeum* 6th March 1997, 312. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9038432/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Briefly reviews the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock's *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).
2. 'How "Rhododaphne" is to be considered a novel the publishers have not explained. Mr. Saintsbury… boldly calls it "a verse novel"! The illustrations by Mr. Townsend are not so good as usual' (p. 312).

Peacock, T. L. (1897) *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhododaphne*. London: Macmillian and Co Limited. <https://archive.org/details/cu31924013534155> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Illustrated edition of ME with Peacock's verse 'novel' *Rhododaphne*.
2. Includes and introduction by George Saintsbury (cf. 1886)
3. Illustrated by F. H. Townsend.

'This Week's Books', *The Saturday Review* 6th March 1897, 256. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/9520060/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock's *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

Smith, R. J. (ed) 'Advertisement', *Cornhill Magazine* 6(36) (1899), 861. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/6614682/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Lists the Macmillian Illustrated Novels edition of T. L. Peacock's *The Misfortunes Of Elphin And Rhodaphne* (1897).

Garnett, R. ‘Professor Saintsbury On Matthew Arnold’, *The Bookman* 16(94), 102. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3019708/fulltext> [Accessed: 8 October 2022].

1. Short review of George Saintsbury’s biography on Matthew Arnold which briefly mentions ME. Both Garnett and Saintsbury edited editions of ME see Peacock, 1891 and 1897 of this appendix.
2. ‘In his essays on Celtic literature he [Matthew Arnold] summed up the peculiar, indefinable quality which renders the best English poetry so exquisite under the happy phrase “Celtic magic.” Professor Saintsbury seems to have some doubts about the adjective, but… Saintsbury who has edited Peacock’s “Misfortunes of Elphin,” knows that the Welsh peasant personifies the foam of the sea as “the white alluring one.” …And if the magic of such a phrase is Celtic, why not ccall it Celtic magic?’ (p. 102.)

Hovey, R. *Taliesin: A Masque*. (1900) Boston: Small, Maynard and Company. <https://archive.org/details/taliesinmasque00hoveuoft> [Accessed: 27 February 2023].

1. The script of the first act of a verse play featuring Taliesin as its protagonist. The first movement was published in 1886 (see above).
2. Primarily based on Arthurian/Grail legends; the only clear allusion to HT is contained in a single early stanza (p. 4).

## Appendix II: Manuscripts Referenced

Bracketed initials preceding the name of each MS are used for ease of reference. Initials correspond to the name of the copyist or the name of the MS. Subscripts are used when a single copyist has provided multiple MSS.

*Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales (NLW)*

| | |
|---|---|
| [W] Llanstephan MS 18 | Copied by Moses Williams, early 18th century. Gwion Bach strand. |
| [O] Llanstephan MS 193 | A copy of [Add MS 14867] made by William Owen Pughe, c. 1783-1796. Gwion Bach strand. |
| [M] MS 1553A | Copied by Roger Morris and Thomas Evans from an unknown exemplar. Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century. Oldest surviving complete narrative of the Gwion Bach strand. |
| [$E_2$] MS 2005B | Copied by Evan Evans, 1774, apparently from a lost John Jones copy of G. Elphin strand. |
| [$E_1$] MS 2022C | Formerly Panton MS 55, copied from a lost Lewis Morris MS by Evan Evans, c. 1765. Gwion Bach strand. |
| [G] MS 5276D | Elis Gruffydd's *Cronicl O Wech Oesoedd*, mid-sixteenth century. Missing a leaf. Oldest extant copy of the Elphin strand and seemingly the source for all other MSS that provide Elphin strand narrative. |
| [P] MS 6209E | Copied by David Perry from a lost John Jones copy of G, 1698-1699. Supplies the material missing due to the lost leaf in G. Elphin strand. |
| [$I_1$] MS 13100B | A copy of A in the hand of Iolo Morganwg. '1799' appears on the first folio. Gwion Bach strand. |
| [$I_2$] MS 13131A | Copied by Iolo Morganwg from $E_2$. Provided the basis for Owen Pughe's translation of HT as well as for the |

| | |
|---|---|
| | second part of Lady Charlotte Guest's translation (Elphin strand). |
| [T] Peniarth MS 2 | Book Of Taliesin (*Llyfr Taliesin*). Various allusions to HT (both strands). |
| [R] Peniarth MS 4-5 | *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* (White Book Of Rhydderch). Older than H. Contains most of the 'Mabinogion' tales, but not HT. |
| [J] Peniarth MS 111 | Copied by John Jones, c. 1607 (Gwion Bach strand). |

*London, British Library (BL)*

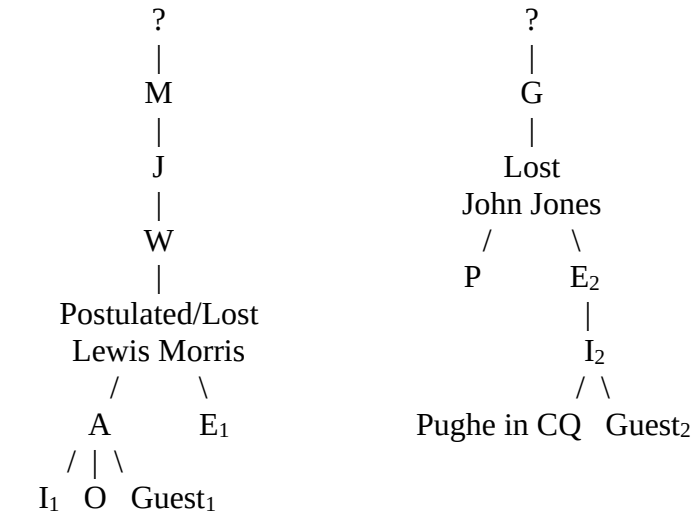
| | |
|---|---|
| [A] Additional MS 14867 | Copied by William Morris, 1755-1763. It was held by the Welsh School's library in London, from where it was accessed by Guest. The MS was donated to the British Museum in 1844.[252] (Gwion Bach strand) |

*Oxford, Jesus College*

| | |
|---|---|
| [H] MS 111 | *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (Red Book Of Hergest). Not as old as, but more complete than R. Contains all the 'Mabinogion' tales except HT. |

[252] Ford, *Ystoria*, p. 55.

***Stemma***[253]




***Nineteenth-Century Views on the Pedigree of HT's MSS***

> The compiler, Hopkin Thomas Phillip, wrote this piece about the year 1370. He lived in Morganwg, or Glamorgan; and his language is an interesting specimen of the Gwentian dialect, and an elegant model for prose composition. I however, have reason to suspect that some of the poetical parts of this romance have been taken by him from some previous work of the same description, as the style and language would induce us to ascribe them to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[254]

Pughe claimed $I_2$ derived from a 1370 source, but the attribution he gives to Hopcyn ap Thomas ap Einion Offeiriad (Hopkin Thomas Philip) is properly dated to the 15th century (see below). Given his further attribution to John Jones, he was apparently unaware of G.[255] John Jones was a prolific copyist; recall that two of the MSS containing HT, J and a lost copy of G, were both his work. Many of Jones' MSS ended up in the collection of Robert Vaughan, Hengwrt, which Pughe had tried and failed to access during his work on MAW.[256] The family who housed the collection at Hengwrt had failed to care for their collection, and their open access policy led to countless thefts. As a result, they eventually restricted access. Pughe was able, however, to meet with one Mr. Herbert, who had 'acquired' some of the Hengwrt MSS:

[253] Based on Ford, *Ystoria*, p. 57.
[254] Idrison, 'Taliesin' part 1, p. 198.
[255] Ford, *Ystoria*, p. 58.
[256] Carr, *William Owen Pughe*, pp. 101, 108-109.

> Having on Monday evening been in the company of Mr. Herbert, I waited upon him the next morning, to ask to see what books he had in his own hands… One large paper quarto 2 inches thick by John Jones of Gelli Lyfdy, consisting of annals and historical fragments… and lastly the llyvyr du and Llyvyr Taliesin, both of which are very curious and valuable.[257]

From this, we know Pughe had direct access to T. One wonders if he ever came across J given his encounter here with a John Jones MS, so near the collection at Hengwrt.

In his *Literature Of The Kymry*, Thomas Stephens discussed and refined Pughe's initial dating attempts:

> The authorship of the Mabinogi of Taliesin is attributed to two persons. In the lolo MSS., at the close of an epitome of the history of Taliesin and Elphin, from the book of Anthony Powel, occur these words: —
>
> "It was from this account that Thomas, the son of Einion Offeiriad, descended from Gruffydd Gwyr, formed his romance of Taliesin, the son of Cerridwen; Elphin, the son of Gwyddno; Rhun, the son of Maelgwn Gwynedd; and the operations of the Cauldron of Cerridwen."
>
> This Thomas ab Einion must have lived about 1260, as a work on Grammar, written by his father, was copied between 1254 and 1280, by Edeyrn Davod Aur; and as, in addition to that fact, Gwilym Ddu, about 1320, terms Taliesin "Gwion Bach," as if that romantic name was well known, we may safely conclude that this Mabinogi probably belongs to the beginning of the reign of Llywelyn ab Grufiydd. The second person who is the supposed composer, is Hopkin Thomas Phylip, also of Glamorgan; Dr. Pughe supposes that he wrote the connecting prose passages, but that the poetical passages, were what he professes his book to be, collected from other works. In one place, Dr. Pughe says this person lived about 1370; but if we take another and more probable date given by the same author, and place him from 1590 to 1630, the two accounts may be reconciled, Thomas ab Einion being the author, and Hopkin Thomas Phylip the copyist.[258]

Guest's extensive notes reference numerous MSS and their various contributions to information on HT and on Taliesin himself. Regarding HT's genesis, her suggestions echo, but differ, to Pughe's and Stephens':

> The various poems recited in the Tale of Taliesin appear to have been composed at different periods, and it is not improbable that the above mentioned Thomas ab Einion Offeiriad, collected the poems attributed to Taliesin, which were in existence before his time, and added others, to form the Mabinogi, which, from expression in pages 360 and 361, and

[257] Quoted in Carr, *William Owen Pughe*, p. 109; originally from BL Add MS 15030 t. 192.
[258] Stephens, *Literature*, pp. 425-426.

> the very numerous transformations stated in the poetry, but not given in the prose, must have been much more complete than in its present state.[259]

In contrast to Stephens, she concludes that Thomas was 'not the author but merely the compiler of the already well-known story of Ceridwen, Taliesin, and Elphin.'[260]

Of her MS sources, Guest says:

> No perfect copy of the Mabinogi of Taliesin being accessible, it has been necessary to print it in the present series from two fragments. The former of the two is contained in a MS. in the Library of the Welsh School, in London. It is written in a modern round hand, and bears the title "Y Prif-feirdd Cymreig, sef Canau &c. a gasglwyd ganwyf fi, William Morris o Gaergybi ym Môn, 1758. The MS. is of Quarto size.
>
> The second fragment is from a MS. in the library of the late Iolo Morganwg, and was kindly communicated by his son, the late Mr. Taliesin Williams, (Ab Iolo.)[261]

These MSS are to be identified with A and $I_2$. It is clear from this description that Guest accessed A herself, instead of receiving a transcription from Tegid as with the tales from H. The second part however, sounds as though it may have been a transcription prepared by Iolo's son Taliesin, rather than direct access to the MS itself.

The authenticity of Guest's and Pughe's sources came into question in 1868, when W. F. Skene wrote:

> In his introductory remarks [Pughe] states that the compiler [of HT], Hopkin Thomas Philip, wrote this piece about the year 1370… [Guest] states that her copy was made up from two fragments—the one contained in a MS of the library of the Welsh school in London, written in a modern hand and dated 1758; the other from a MS belonging to Iolo Morganwg. The fragment in the Welsh school library was probably that printed in the Myvyrian Archaeology; and the MS belonging to Iolo Morganwg, that used by Dr. Owen Pughe, as the latter states in his introductory remarks 'Of the narrative part but one version exists.'

The implication is that Iolo was behind both A and $I_2$; thus accepting Guest's or Pughe's translations of HT depends on taking Iolo, the infamous forger, at his word regarding the provenance of the MSS. A contributor to the *Archaeologia Cambrensis*,

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[259] Davies had similar thoughts: 'The narrator seems to have abridged his tale from a *larger history*, or tradition, to which he refers'. Davies, *Mythology And Rites*, p. 255; Guest, *Mabinogion* vol 3, p. 394.
[260] Guest, *Mabinogion* vol 3, p. 395.
[261] Ibid, p. 365.

D. Silvan Evans , soundly refuted Skene's argument, but not until over fifteen years later.

> In the collection of Welsh MSS. at Llanover, near Abergaveeny, is a MS. volume belonging to the latter part of the sixteenth or the early part of the seventeenth century, containing this very tale. It agrees, with some verbal differences, with the copy in the *Myvyrian Archaiology*; but the variants prove that the printed copy could not have been taken from that MS. By comparing this MS., of which this *Mabinogi* forms but a small portion, with another in the same collection, which is stated to be in the hand-writing of Llywelyn Sion, the Glamorgan poet, one can hardly help concluding that both proceeded from the same pen. Llywelyn Sion died in 1616, and this MS cannot be materially later than that date. To those conversant with the Welsh language, internal evidence alone is quite sufficient to prove that this *Mabinogi* cannot be the production of a person who died in the third decade of the nineteenth century.[262]

[262] D. S. Evans, 'Miscellanea', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* fifth series 1(1) (1884), 75-79 (p. 77). For more information the MS by Llewelyn Siôn, see Ford, 'A Fragment Of The Hanes Taliesin By Llewelyn Siôn'.

## Appendix III: Poetry Associated with *Hanes Taliesin*

### *Identifying the Poems*

*Table 1: Poems Related to HT, Identified by Title, First Line, and Associated Tradition*

| English Title | Welsh Title | First Line | Tradition |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Inundation Of Cantref Gwaelod | Pan Ddaeth Y Mor Tros Gantrev Y Gwaelawd | Seithenin, safde allan | IG |
| The Sorrow Of Gwyddno | Gwyddneu Ai Cant | Kyd karui vi Morva, kassaa vi mor pur | IG |
| The Consolation Of Elphin | Dyhuddiant Elphin | Elphin deg taw a'th wylo | HT |
| Casualties Of The Bard | Damweinion Y Bardd[263] | Cyntaf in lluniwyd ar lyn dyn glwys | HT |
| Notices Of The Power Of The Bard | Syniadau Ar Ddoniau Y Bardd[264] | Ar ddwr mae cyvlwrw can fendigaw | HT |
| 'A journey will I perform' | Pedestric a wnaf | | HT |
| The History Of Taliesin | Hanes Taliesin | Prifardd cyseffin wyfi Elphin | HT |
| 'Puny bards, I am trying...' | Cul Fardd ocisiaw ir wyf | | HT |
| Challenge To The Bards Of Maelgwn | Her I Feirdd Maelgwn[265] | (Neud) gognawd gyru[266] | HT |
| 'Be silent, then, ye unlucky rhyming bards' | Tewch chwi Bosfeirddion fleilsion anhylwydd | | HT |
| Again To The Bards Of Maelgwn | Eto I Ferdd Maelgwn[267] | Gosgordd fardd uchod | HT |

[263] Pughe's title. Idrison, 'Taliesin', part 2, p. 369.
[264] Ibid, p. 366.
[265] Ibid, p. 366.
[266] Pughe in CQ: 'Neud gognawd gyru'; MAW: 'Gognawd gyru'; Guest skips the first fourteen lines and begins at 'Os ywch brif feirddion'.
[267] Pughe's title. Idrison, 'Taliesin', part 2, p. 368.

*Table 1 (Continued)*

| English Title | Welsh Title | First Line | Tradition |
|---|---|---|---|
| To The Wind | I'r Gwynt | Dychimic di pwy yw | LT[268] |
| The Song Of The Wind | Canu Y Gwynt | Kychwedl am doddyw o Galchfynydd | LT |
| The Song Of Mead | Canu Y Med | Golychaf wledic, pendeuic popwa | LT[269] |
| The Masterpiece Of The Bards | Gorchest Y Beirdd | Pa ddyn gyntaf | HT |
| The Castigation/ Spite Of The Bards | Cystwy Y Beirdd | Os ydwyt di Fardd cyfrisgin | HT |
| The Gall Of The Bards | Bustl Y Beirdd | Cler o gam arfor a arforant | HT |
| One Of The Four Canons Of Song | Un O Bedair Colofn Cerdd[270] | Ef a wnaeth Panton | HT |
| The Battle Of The Trees | Cat Godeu | Bum yn lliaws rith | LT[271] |
| The Chair Of Ceridwen | Cadeir Cerrituen | Ren ry'm awyr titheu | LT[272] |
| The Chair Of Taliesin | Cadeir Taliesin | Golchaf-i Gulwyd, arglwyd pop echen | LT[273] |
| The Spoils Of Annwfyn | Preideu Annwfyn | Golchaf Wledic, Pendeuic gwlat ri, | LT[274] |

Table 1 lists the poems which occur in English-language references to or in translations of HT before the twentieth century. The titles vary; I have selected a contemporary title for both the English and the Welsh. Titles which do not include a footnote are applied by multiple writers within various nineteenth century publications. Poems for which contemporaries did not seem to have a title are described by their first

[268] Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, pp. 328-347.
[269] Ibid, pp. 348-356.
[270] Pughe's title in CQ. MAW titles it 'Yr Awdyl Fraith'.
[271] Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, pp. 167-239.
[272] Ibid, pp. 312-327.
[273] Ibid, pp. 273-292.
[274] Ibid, pp. 433-451.

line instead. The first line of each poem, in Welsh, is included, but orthography can vary greatly depending on the source. Still, these should help clarify which poem I am referring to should confusion arise. Poems concerning IG are listed first, followed by poems used in Guest's and Pughe's translations (in the order of their appearance in these translations, prioritizing Guest where there are discrepancies). The last four poems in the table do not appear in either translation but provide examples of poems from LT which are sometimes discussed in relation to HT in nineteenth-century literature.

***Confusion Between Poems***

The poems which seem to most frequently be confused with each other can be divided into two categories. See Table 1 for the first line of each poem.

*Table 2: Distinct Poems Referred To By One Title*

| Poems referred to as 'Hanes Taliesin' | Poems referred to as 'Canu Y Gwynt' |
|---|---|
| 1. Damweinion Y Bardd<br>2. Syniadau Ar Ddoniau Y Bardd<br>3. Hanes Taliesin | 1. I'r Gwynt<br>2. Canu Y Gwynt |

In *Specimens*, Evan Evans tells us that 'Taliesin was introduced by Elphin to his father Gwyddno's court, where he delivered him a poem, giving an account of himself, intitled, Hanes Taliesin, or Taliesin's History.' Several other authors follow suit, describing the performance of 'Hanes Taliesin' as taking place at Gwyddno's court in the HT narrative. In Guest's translation, this would best correspond to what Pughe titles 'Syniadau Ar Ddoniau Y Bardd', as this poem explicitly occurs at court following an interaction between Taliesin and Gwyddno. In it, Taliesin describes himself as thrice-born, but there is little else that can be considered his 'history'. More appropriately, the reference may be to 'Damweinion Y Bardd', which seems to describe a variant of the Gwion strand. Though this is *not* spoken at Gwyddno's court according to Guest, her manuscript source says it *is* spoken to Gwyddno (Guest tells us in a footnote that this seems to be a mistake by the copyist and should read 'Elphin' as at this point in the story Elphin has just recovered Taliesin from the weir).[275] This all said, the poem which

[275] Guest, *Mabinogion* vol 3, pp. 362-364.

by its content fits the title 'Hanes Taliesin' best, and is labeled as such in MAW, is the poem which Guest, Pughe, and Elis Gruffydd supply within the narrative during Taliesin's visit to the court of Maelgwn, not the court of Gwyddno. These discrepencies are to be expected though, for as Ford tells us

> The poems in the tale present a special problem. They were not considered an integral part of the tale, and many manuscripts omit them entirely. Elsewhere, we find the poems, but without the prose or separated from it. Even where the poems are integrated with the text, there is little agreement on their order from one manuscript to the next.[276]

This goes a long way to explain conflation not only of each poem's title but of their role within the narrative. The case of 'I'r Gwynt' and 'Canu Y Gwynt' is simpler. These are the titles used in MAW, and 'I'r Gwynt' is the only one of the two which appears in any translation of HT (Guest's).[277] It also appears in LT, while 'Canu Y Gwynt' does not.[278] Ford's comment should be kept in mind regarding Guest's, Pughe's, and even Peacock's decisions about which poems to use in their adpatations, and where they best fit.

***Incorporating the Poems into the Narrative***

The nineteenth-century English translators of HT had different ideas about the relationship between the poems included in their manuscript exemplars, A and $I_2$ (see Appendix II). Even though Guest largely used Pughe's translations for the poems, she made sure to integrate each poem into the narrative and added a couple of additional poems, not in her MS sources, from MAW. Pughe meanwhile only placed a few of his poems directly within the prose sections, separating out the rest and placing them at the beginning of Part 2 of his translation. The additional poems included by Guest are 'Canu Y Med' and 'I'r Gwynt'. She may have been inspired to add the former from reading the note on it in MAW, which states 'This poem was written when his [Taliesin's] patron, Elphin ap Gwyddno, was imprisoned'.[279] Interestingly, Peacock adapts both these poems in ME. He probably took the idea from Meyrick, who states

[276] Ford, *The Mabinogi*, pp. 153-154.
[277] Though Peacock adapted 'Canu Y Gwynt' in ME. See Part 1, p. 16, note 61.
[278] Haycock calls it, confusingly for our purposes, 'The Song Of The Wind' but I have opted for 'To The Wind' as 'I'r Gwynt' seems to have been the nineteenth century's title of choice in most instances.
[279] Jones et al., MAW vol 1, p. 22.

> We have the invocation for Elphin's release still preserved in a song, entitled, Kame Y Medd [sic], or an address to Mead, a celebrated Welsh beverage… Taliesin wrote another also on the same subject, but addressed I'r Gwynt, 'to the wind.'[280]

Table 3 shows the order in which Guest and Pughe provide the poems in their respective translations. To give a sense of how their treatments compare to an example from the manuscript tradition, I also include G's ordering (from which $I_2$ derives).[281]

*Table 3: Order in Which Poems Appear in Different Versions of HT*

| G | Pughe | Guest |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Dyhuddiant Elphin[282] | 1. Dyhuddiant Elphin | 1. Dyhuddiant Elphin |
| 2. 'Pedestric a wnaf …'<br>3. Hanes Taliesin<br>4. 'Cul Fardd ocisiaw ir wyf…' | 2. ' Pedestric a wnaf …'<br>Grouped:<br>3. Syniadau Ar Ddoniau Y Bardd<br>4. Her I Feirdd Maelgwn<br>5. Eto I Ferdd Maelgwn<br>6. Damweinion Y Bardd<br>7. Hanes Taliesin<br>8. 'Cul Fardd ocisiaw ir wyf…' | 2. Damweinion Y Bardd<br>3. Syniadau Ar Ddoniau Y Bardd<br>4. 'Pedestric a wnaf …'<br>5. Hanes Taliesin<br>6. 'Cul Fardd ocisiaw ir wyf…'<br>7. Her I Feirdd Maelgwn (partial)<br>8. 'Tewch chwi Bosfeirddion fleilsion anhylwydd' |
| | | 9. I'r Gwynt*<br>10. Canu Y Med* |
| 5. Gorchest Y Beirdd<br>6. Cystwy Y Beirdd<br>7. Bustl Y Beirdd<br>8. Un O Bedair Colofn Cerdd | 9. Gorchest Y Beirdd<br>10. Cystwy Y Beirdd<br>11. Bustl Y Beirdd (combined with 'Tewch chwi Bosfeirddion fleilsion anhylwydd')<br>12. Un O Bedair Colofn Cerdd | 11. Gorchest Y Beirdd<br>12. Cystwy Y Beirdd<br>13. Bustl Y Beirdd<br>14. Un O Bedair Colofn Cerdd |

* Taken from MAW. The first few lines of 'The Song Of Mead' are repeated at the very end of Guest's translation.

Note that five of poems are grouped together at the beginning of Pughe's second part to his translation. They are tied into the narrative loosely by the closing of his Part 1 and the opening to the prose of Part 2, which read 'Then Taliesin answered him

[280] Meyrick, *Cardiganshire*, p. 62.
[281] The ordering I use is based on Ford's transcription in his *Ystoria*.
[282] Only the first four lines.

satirically, as seen here' and 'When this composition became known to the king and his nobles, they became greatly surprised'.[283]

### *Reception of Individual Poems in Books*

Certain poems received more attention from writers than others. To track various treatments, I attempt to summarize how different books dealt with specific poems by representing their treatments with some simple categories as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| W | The text provides the poem in Welsh; |
| E | The text provides an English translation of the poem; |
| w, e | As W and E, but only *part* of the poem is provided; |
| A | The poem is creatively adapted or the translation is very loose; |
| N | The poem is discussed, in English, in the context of the HT narrative; |
| M | The poem is mentioned, in English, but no connection made to HT. |

For instance, 'WEN' would mean that the whole poem is quoted in Welsh with its English translation and is discussed in connection to the HT narrative; 'wE' would indicate that the poem has at least one line of the Welsh and a translation of its entirety, but since there is no 'N' the poem is not discussed in the context of HT for that particular book.

Only poems which are frequently commented upon and/or quoted during the nineteenth century are included in the table. Nutt's *Voyage Of Bran* is excluded as the only poem it clearly references is 'Cat Godeu'. 'Cat Godeu', 'Cadeir Cerrituen', 'Cadeir Taliesin', and 'Preideu Annwfyn' are all referenced with similar frequency and in similar ways and so, to keep the table to a manageable size, I have selected just one of them to include ('Preideu Annwfyn').

[283] Idrison, 'Taliesin', part 1, p. 214; Idrison, 'Taliesin', part 2, p. 232.

*Table 4: Reception Of HT-Related Poems*

| Year | Author | Source | Pan Ddaeth Y Mor | Gwyddneu Ai Cant | Dyhuddiant Elphin | Damweinion Y Bardd | Syniadau Ar Ddoniau Y Bardd | Hanes Taliesin |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1764 | Evans, E. | *Specimens* | N | | EN | N* | | |
| 1794 | Jones, E. | *Relicks* | | | N | N* | | |
| 1802 | Jones, E. | *Bardic Museum* | WEN | | N | | | |
| 1803 | Pughe, W. O. | *Cambrian Biography* | | M | | | | |
| 1808 | Meyrick, S. R. | *Cardiganshire* | WEN | WEN | WEN | WEN | | WEN |
| 1809 | Davies, E. | *Mythology And Rites* | | | N | weN | weN | N |
| 1824 | Parry, J. H. | *Cambrian Plutarch* | | | N | | | |
| 1824 | Prichard, T. J. L. | *Welsh Minstrelsy* | AN | | | N* | | |
| 1829 | Peacock, T. L. | ME | AN | AN | AN | AN* | | |
| 1849 | Stephens, T. | *Literature* | | | WEN | WEN | | WEN |
| 1858 | Nash, D. W. | *Taliesin* | M | | WEN | WEN | WEN | WEN |
| 1860 | Borrow, G. H. | *Sleeping Bard* | | | | | | |
| 1862 | Ab Ithel, J. W. | *Barddas* | | | | | | M |
| 1868 | Skene, W. F. | *Four Ancient Books* | | | | | | |
| 1888 | Rhŷs, J. | *Lectures* | | | N | N | N | |
| 1891 | Rhŷs, J. | *Studies* | N | | | | | |

Though a proper analysis of the treatments of these poems would require another essay, I will make some basic observations. Table 4 shows that 'Pan Ddaeth Y Mor Tros Gantrev Y Gwaelawd' is referenced frequently up through ME's publication but rarely thereafter. As this poem concerns IG, and therefore Gwyddno, this is not surprising since the Elphin strand held prominence during this period (see Part 1: *Hanes Taliesin* Before 1830). Poems associated with the infant Taliesin's poetic utterances in the wake of the weir scene are also well-represented during this period and continue to turn up throughout the century as they are involved in both strands of HT, though there is a noticeable dearth of references to them for the thirty years between Nash's *Taliesin* and Rhŷs' *Lectures*. Nearly half of these poems are not only discussed in relation to the narrative, but are quoted in Welsh with English translation, often in full.

*Table 4 (Continued)*

| Year | Author | Source | Her I Feirdd Maelgwn | I'r Gwynt | Canu Y Gwynt | Canu Y Med | Bustl Y Beirdd | Preideu Annwfyn |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1764 | Evans, E. | *Specimens* | | | | | | |
| 1794 | Jones, E. | *Relicks* | | | | | | |
| 1802 | Jones, E. | *Bardic Museum* | | | | | | |
| 1803 | Pughe, W. O. | *Cambrian Biography* | | | | | | |
| 1808 | Meyrick, S. R. | *Cardiganshire* | | N | | N | | |
| 1809 | Davies, E. | *Mythology And Rites* | | | | | | N |
| 1824 | Parry, J.H. | *Cambrian Plutarch* | | | | E N | | |
| 1824 | Prichard, T. J. L. | *Welsh Minstrelsy* | | N | | N | | |
| 1829 | Peacock, T. L. | ME | | | A | A N | A N | |
| 1849 | Stephens, T. | *Literature* | | | | W E N | | W E |
| 1858 | Nash, D. W. | *Taliesin* | W E N | W E N | | W E N | | W E |
| 1860 | Borrow, G. H. | *Sleeping Bard* | | | | | | |
| 1862 | Ab Ithel, J. W. | *Barddas* | | | | | | |
| 1868 | Skene, W. F. | *Four Ancient Books* | | W E | | W E | | W E |
| 1888 | Rhŷs, J. | *Lectures* | | M | e | | | e |
| 1891 | Rhŷs, J. | *Studies* | | w e | | w e | | w e |

* See ***Confusion Between Poems***, pp. 92-93.

Turning to poems associated primarily with the Elphin strand, the patterns change significantly. In general, contrary to what we might expect given the emphasis towards the Gwion strand in later years (see Part 3: Reception 1850-1900) there are more explicit references to Elphin strand poems *after* 1849 than before. On the other hand, the actual moments in which these poems are directly discussed in relation to the Elphin strand narrative occur only as late as Nash's *Taliesin* in 1858. Interestingly, the Elphin strand poem which gets the most narrative-related attention after 'Hanes Taliesin' is 'Canu Y Medd', which is originally from LT, not from any HT manuscript.

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[284] Probably E. W. Gosse; Cf. E. W. Gosse, '*The Works Of Thomas Love Peacock*', *The Academy*, 6th March 1875, 234-236.

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