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CHAPTER 2

The Daughters of Llywelyn Fawr¹⁰⁶

This chapter concentrates on one particular group of women who were the five daughters of the Welsh ruler, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, later known as Llywelyn Fawr, who lived from 1173 to 1240AD. I have tried to piece together the available biographical and political information and form a picture of the lives of these women. Llywelyn Fawr's two sons, Gruffudd and Dafydd, were not the outstanding success their father had been. This is not an uncommon story, as throughout history the sons of strong rulers are very often not as successful as their fathers. On the other hand, Llywelyn Fawr's five daughters may be regarded as having made a strong and sustained contribution to Welsh medieval history. They were mainly active in the private familial area, but at times their actions may be seen as public and political. Although much has been written about Llywelyn's two sons this is not the case with his daughters, and this chapter should redress this omission.

Llywelyn was very successful in asserting his dominance in Wales in the early thirteenth century. In fact R.R.Davies has said that 'his superiority within native Wales from 1218 to 1240 was geographically more extensive and more fully articulated than that enjoyed by any other Welsh prince since the coming of the Normans.'¹⁰⁷ Llywelyn Fawr's success was due to his military capabilities and his shrewd leadership, but he also made politically advantageous marriages for himself and for his children. Llywelyn himself married Joan, the illegitimate daughter of King John in 1205 which increased his prestige and power. He had

¹⁰⁶ This chapter formed the basis for a paper which I presented at the Fourth Australian Conference of Celtic Studies, 30 June – 3 July, 2001, and which was published in the Proceedings of the conference in 2003. See G. Richards, 'The Daughters of Llywelyn Fawr' in P. O'Neill, ed., *Nation and Federation in the Celtic World* (Sydney: Sydney Series in Celtic Studies 6, Celtic Studies Foundation, University of Sydney, 2003), pp.22-34.

¹⁰⁷ Davies, *Conquest, Co-existence and Change*, p.244.

already fathered a son and at least one daughter from a previous liaison with a Welsh woman known as Tangwystl and his marriage to Joan resulted in the birth of one legitimate son and possibly three legitimate daughters. There is some disagreement among scholars as to whether Joan was in fact the mother of all three daughters. Also, according to Peter Bartrum's *Welsh Genealogies*, Llywelyn fathered at least one other illegitimate daughter, however Bartrum does not give her mother's name.¹⁰⁸

R.R. Davies did discuss the fact that Llywelyn ab Iorwerth arranged marriages for his children, but I find it significant that while he did not mention the daughters by name, he referred to the sons by name. He talked about 'Gruffudd, his son by a pre-marital liaison' and 'his only legitimate son, Dafydd'. On the other hand, when Davies discussed the daughters, he talked of Llywelyn 'marrying one of his daughters to the earl's nephew and heir', 'one of his daughters was married to Reginald Braose and on his death to Ralph Mortimer', 'a second daughter was married successively to John Braose ... and Walter Clifford' and 'a third daughter was wed into the Lacy family'.¹⁰⁹ Clearly the women were not considered important enough to name. As the daughters of Llywelyn Fawr, these women were considered important enough in the eyes of genealogists and chroniclers as they are named in the genealogical charts and some are mentioned in the chronicles. These women are worthy of inclusion in Welsh history and are therefore presented individually, by name.

Gwenllian

Gwenllian was the illegitimate daughter of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Tangwystl ferch Llywarch Goch. She was referred to by Davies as the 'third daughter who was wed into the Lacy family'. One source suggests that Llywelyn ab Iorwerth was married to Tangwystl who was the daughter of Llywarch Goch,

¹⁰⁸ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, vol. 3, p.446.

¹⁰⁹ Davies, *Conquest, Co-existence and Change*, p.248.

Lord of Rhos, and that his marriage to Joan was his second marriage.¹¹⁰ I am unable to confirm this, and I feel that Llywelyn ab Iorwerth's subsequent absolute determination to make his legitimate son Dafydd his heir, probably proves that Gwenllian was illegitimate as was her brother Gruffudd, Llywelyn's eldest son. Gwenllian de Lacy, as she is always known, is mentioned many times in the various legal rolls and documents for Britain in the thirteenth century. J.E. Lloyd wrote a very interesting paper titled 'Who was Gwenllian de Lacy?'¹¹¹ in which he explained who she was and accounted for a few anomalies which have appeared in references to Gwenllian. Gwenllian was presumably born some time before Llywelyn's marriage to Joan in 1205 and, by medieval standards, she lived a very long life because she seems to have died somewhere between 1280 and 1282. This would make her in her seventies or possibly even eighty years of age when she died. Gwenllian is visible in the legal record on August 30, 1280 when the king notified his bailiffs of Ireland to appoint attorneys to act for 'Wanteliana de Lacy' in plaints and pleas for a year in Irish courts,¹¹² but by 1282 she was dead, because a letter from Theobald de Verdun to the Bishop of Bath and Wells dated soon after October 23, 1282, discusses a dispute over who was the rightful heir to Gwenllian's dower property in Ireland now that she had died.¹¹³

Although Gwenllian was born in Wales of Welsh parents, she seems to have spent most of her adult life in Ireland. We do not know the exact date, but some time around 1222 Llywelyn Fawr arranged the marriage of Gwenllian to William de Lacy. He was the son of Hugh de Lacy, the Earl of Ulster,¹¹⁴ by his Irish second wife, Rose, the daughter of King Rory O'Connor of Connacht.¹¹⁵ According to Robin Frame, William de Lacy 'exploited his native Irish

¹¹⁰ *The Roll of the House of Lacy*. Collected and compiled by De Lacy-Bellingari (Baltimore: 1928), p.63.

For Tangwystl, Gwenllian's mother, Chapter 6.

¹¹¹ Lloyd, 'Who was Gwenllian de Lacy?', pp.292-98.

¹¹² *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland, 1252-1284*, vol II, H.S. Sweetman, ed. (London: 1877), p.277.

¹¹³ *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland, 1252-1284*, vol II, p.455.

¹¹⁴ Lloyd, 'Who was Gwenllian de Lacy?', p.293.

¹¹⁵ Frame, *Ireland and Britain 1170-1450*, p.37.

connections in an attempt to carve out a lordship for himself on the borders of Meath and Connacht.¹¹⁶ Robin Frame also made the curious comment that we should not view William de Lacy 'as a mongrel tethered in the Celtic fringe' and explained his significant connections with the important baronial Lacy family. He also made the point that 'Llywelyn ab Iorwerth did not throw his daughters away on Welshmen, let alone Irishmen; he used them to seal alliances with major baronial families'.¹¹⁷ In other words, he married them into the ruling Anglo-Norman families. Unfortunately, I believe Robin Frame may be mistaken here, because as we shall see, another of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth's illegitimate daughters did marry a Welshman.

On her marriage Gwenllïan received from her father Welsh lands in the Perfeddwlad district in modern day Denbighshire, in Tegeingl and Dyffryn Clwyd and possibly in Rhufoniog.¹¹⁸ She still held these lands at her death because on November 14, 1281 Reginald de Grey was appointed Justice of Chester and received custody of the 'lands and tenements late of Wentheliana de Lacy' which were valued at £32.0.3½d.¹¹⁹ After her husband's death in 1233, Gwenllïan also received dower lands in Ballymagarvey, County Meath in Ireland and 'she held the whole demesne with the services of the free tenants for her life'.¹²⁰ Gwenllïan seems to have produced at least one son, Sir Nicholas de Lacy. *The Roll of the House of Lacy* mentions that 'Nicholas seems to have been born at Carrickfergus Castle', that 'it is very likely that William de Lacy of Castlemahon in West Limerick was a brother of Nicholas' and that there were 'perhaps others'.¹²¹ Ballymagarvey House in County Meath was still in existence in 2000, and was at that time a horse stud, situated on the N2, the Dublin-Derry Road, approximately 25 miles from Dublin. A turret on the left of the house was part of a very old house which could possibly date from the thirteenth century. The old

¹¹⁶ Frame, *Ireland and Britain 1170-1450*, p.37.

¹¹⁷ Frame, *Ireland and Britain 1170-1450*, p.37.

¹¹⁸ Lloyd, 'Who was Gwenllïan de Lacy?', p.295.

¹¹⁹ *Calendar of Patent Rolls of Edward I, 1272-1281* (London: Kraus reprint, 1971), p.464.

¹²⁰ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward I*, vol. II (London: Kraus reprint, 1973), p.264.

¹²¹ *The Roll of the House of Lacy*, p.82.

church and cemetery at Ballymagarvey, which still remain, date from the thirteenth century.¹²²

It is interesting to try to imagine the sort of life Gwenllïan would have experienced. She was the daughter of the foremost ruler in Wales in his time but it is not known whether she would have been brought up by her father's family, although she would have been in a privileged position. Her father had arranged a politically advantageous marriage for her, probably more with a view to his own advantage than hers, but nevertheless in the elite feudal society of the thirteenth century a suitable marriage would have been as desirable to the woman as it was to her parents.¹²³

The de Lacy family in Ireland were against the crown in the early thirteenth century, firstly King John and then Henry III, and William de Lacy was visible in the various letters and legal documents of the time. For example on February 10, 1215, having been in custody, William was released on the surety of his brother Walter de Lacy and others, that 'William shall become the king's liege man, faithfully serve the king all the days of his life, and never part with his land in Ireland, save at the king's pleasure'.¹²⁴ An interesting name among those standing surety for William is that of Walter de Clifford, who was later to marry Gwenllïan's half-sister Margaret. William does not appear to have respected this pledge for long as on July 2, 1217, another document shows that Walter de Lacy 'has given security that he will make amends for the excesses of William de Lascy towards the King'.¹²⁵ *The Annals of Clonmacnoise* for the year 1215 mention that

William sonne of Hugh Delacye came from England and tooke upon him the kingdome of Meath and government thereof. Whereupon there arose

¹²² I visited Ballymagarvey again in September 2004 and the buildings had been completely demolished, except for the thirteenth-century tower. It appeared to be part of a rebuilding program, hopefully including restoration of the tower. The church and cemetery still remain.

¹²³ Henrietta Leyser refers to the 'expectations of young girls that husbands would be found for them who would bring both them and their families income and honour'. H. Leyser, *Medieval Women: A Social History of Women in England 450-1500* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1995), p.118.

¹²⁴ *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland*, vol I, p.84.

¹²⁵ *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland*, vol I, p.118.

great contention and warrs between the English of the south of Ireland in generall and him, whereby many Damages and losses of preys and spoyles were sustained by either party.¹²⁶

This would explain the 'excesses towards the King' for which William de Lacy needed to make amends.

Presumably Gwenllian moved to Ireland upon her marriage around 1222, so she would probably have been living in County Meath at Ballymagarvey. William de Lacy was also active in counties Cavan, Leitrim and Longford in 1224 and according to Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven he was in charge in this area and Cathal Croiderg O'Connor was complaining to the king, who was by this time Henry III, about William de Lacy as 'Cathal's enemy and kinsman of the king's enemy'.¹²⁷ The political advantage for Llywelyn Fawr by marrying Gwenllian to William de Lacy was of course that it suited his own position against the crown to have an ally in Ireland.

Unfortunately for William de Lacy, on June 19, 1224, William Marshal, the earl of Pembroke arrived in Ireland, was appointed Justiciar, and proceeded to attack the de Lacys. In a letter from the Marshal to the king, he described his campaign and mentioned that he took the castle of William de Lacy and took into custody his wife, who the Marshal stated was the daughter of Llywelyn, the sister of Gruffydd from father and mother,¹²⁸ which confirms exactly the identity of Gwenllian de Lacy. William Marshal seems to have taken the trouble to make a point here of precisely who his prisoner was and her relationship with Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, and this is no doubt due to the Marshal's own problems with his lands in Wales which Llywelyn ab Iorwerth had recently tried to appropriate as part of his expansion. Robin Frame feels that in stressing that Gwenllian, as Gruffudd's full sister, was not a legitimate daughter of Llywelyn and Joan,

¹²⁶ *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, D. Murphy, ed. (Dublin: University Press, 1896), p.228.

¹²⁷ A.J. Otway-Ruthven, *A History of Medieval Ireland* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1980), p.90.

¹²⁸ *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland vol I*, pp.182-84. See also *Royal and Other Historical Letters Illustrative of the Reign of Henry III*, vol. I, 1216-1235, W.W. Shirley, ed. (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1862), pp.500-503.

William Marshal was assuring Henry III that his prisoner was not the king's kinswoman.¹²⁹ Interestingly, the letter reported that the wife and mother of William de Lacy were taken from a castle at Crannog O'Reilly. Gwenllian therefore seems to have been living for a period in a crannog which belonged to the O'Reilly family.¹³⁰ The letter which was dated August 5, 1224 stated that William's wife was still in custody, and I am not able to find out for how much longer she remained so, but it must have been at least two months. The stronghold of the O'Reillys was on an island in Lough Oughter, County Cavan. The remains of a castle tower dating from the thirteenth century may still be viewed from the shore of Lough Oughter.¹³¹

The letter from William Marshal to Henry III of 1224 makes quite interesting reading. Apparently at one point, after William de Lacy escaped, he 'killed his horse with his own hand, abandoned his arms, fled into a moor, and was obliged to throw himself on the mercy of the Irish.' O'Reilly himself seems to have assisted William Marshal's men to take the castle at Crannog O'Reilly.¹³²

William de Lacy later became a loyal supporter of Henry III because 'he served the king in Brittany in 1230 and in Wales in 1231, and was in receipt of fees and gifts in England and Ireland that connect him with the royal household'.¹³³ The Close Rolls of Henry III show that in 1227 the king granted him £20 a year 'for his maintenance on the king's service' and in 1229 this annual fee is mentioned once more in the Close Rolls.¹³⁴ He died in 1233 because *The Annals of Clonmacnoise* for 1233 record that

William Delacy, chiefest champion in these parts of Europe, and the hardiest and strongest hand of any Englishman from the Nicene seas to

¹²⁹ Frame, *Ireland and Britain 1170-1450*, p.159.

¹³⁰ A crannog is a stockaded island, in a lake, constructed of *cramn*, trees. See *The Annals of Loch Cé*, p.260.

¹³¹ The present writer visited Lough Oughter, County Cavan, which is said to be the site of the O'Reilly castle, in September, 2004. The remains of a castle are visible today.

¹³² *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland, vol I*, pp.182-4.

¹³³ Frame, *Ireland and Britain 1170-1450*, p.37.

¹³⁴ *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland, vol I*, pp.230, 256.

this place, or Irishman, was hurt in a skirmish in the Brenie, came to his house, and there died of the wound.¹³⁵

Gwenllian was married to William de Lacy for approximately eleven years but after his death she remained a widow for the rest of her life because there is no record of her remarrying. She was, however, visible in the legal records asserting her rights with regard to her property in Wales and her other business affairs. Gwenllian took an action against her half-brother, Dafydd ap Llywelyn, for the return of four of her villis which she said he had taken from her and held them unjustly. In 1241 Dafydd, who was Llywelyn Fawr's heir, had succeeded his father as ruler of Gwynedd, although the area over which he ruled had been much reduced by the actions of Henry III. At this hearing Gwenllian stated that the villis in question, which comprised 'Aberwhyler, Penpedow, Ystrad Melened and Tretowr' had been given to her by her father, and she still held them through her charter.¹³⁶ J.E. Lloyd also discussed in his paper the whereabouts of Gwenllian's villis in Wales. He mentioned the township of Penbedw in Tegeingl, but could not account for villis in Rhos or Dyffryn Clwyd. He did suggest that 'Llys Gwenllian', in the commote of 'Cymeirch' in Rhufoniog may have been one of her villis.¹³⁷

I note that more recently *Llys Gwenllian* is mentioned by Glanville Jones in his article titled *Llys and Maerdref* as part of his discussion of the archaeological site of the *Llys* at Ystrad Owain, which is the site which Lloyd referred to as Gwenllian's possible home.¹³⁸ Jones has a reference to Lloyd's paper, but he has drawn no conclusions. The use of the Welsh word *Llys*, which means 'court' implies power associated with a person of secular importance. That a place-name element would be combined with the name of a woman in the

¹³⁵ *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, p.234. Gwenllian was married to a notable man.

¹³⁶ *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, vol. XVI, 1237-1242, L.C. Hector, ed. (London: 1978), p.311. 'que Lewelinus pater ejus eidem Wentiliane dedit per cartam suam, quan inde habet, ...'.

¹³⁷ Lloyd, 'Who was Gwenllian de Lacy?', p.298

¹³⁸ G.R.J. Jones, *Llys and Maerdref* in T.M. Charles-Edwards, Morfydd E. Owen and Paul Russell, eds., *The Welsh King and his Court* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), pp.304-306.

thirteenth century indicates a certain amount of importance associated with Gwenllian.

Other names of places mentioned by Lloyd as possibly belonging to Gwenllian are Maesmynan and Blorant which form the township of Aberwheeler.¹³⁹ Aberwheeler was one of the villis which Dafydd had taken from her, mentioned above. From the foregoing it seems likely that Gwenllian was in possession of the manors of Aberwheeler, Penpedow and Tretower, and it is probable that the 'Estradmelened' mentioned in the *Curia Regis Rolls* refers to the royal manor of Ceinmeirch, known as Ystrad Owain, mentioned by both J.E. Lloyd and G.R.J. Jones.

Gwenllian probably appeared in person at her appeal because no attorneys are mentioned. Dafydd was represented by Aynnanus and his associate(s) who stated that Dafydd did not have a day at this point to reply to her petition, but that they would show her petition to their lord and ask him to show her justice.¹⁴⁰ Gwenllian may have travelled to London on this occasion for this appearance in the king's court in the company of her sister-in-law Senana, who was her brother Gruffudd's wife. From the evidence of the *Curia Regis Roll* it seems that Aynnanus, referred to above, was in court representing Dafydd at the action by Gwenllian, and overheard the previous petition on the list which was presented by Senana, who was trying to arrange for the release of Gruffudd from Dafydd's prison. Aynnanus stated that he and his companions had not come on behalf of their lord [Dafydd] to the presence of the king for the aforementioned case, neither on account of this was their lord called, but they heard well what the aforementioned woman [Senana] had said and that they would freely present

¹³⁹ Lloyd, 'Who was Gwenllian de Lacy?', p.298. Cf. A.H. Williams, *An Introduction to the History of Wales*, vol. II, The Middle Ages: I (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1969), p.170.

¹⁴⁰ *Curia Regis Roll of the Reign of Henry III*, vol. XVI, 1237-1242, L.C. Hector, ed. (London: 1978), p.311. 'set libenter ostendent illam domino suo et illum rogabant quid [sic] exhibeat ei inde justiciam.'

her complaint to their lord, and so on.¹⁴¹ These women were sisters-in-law. Both women appeared consecutively, on the same day, on matters concerning Dafydd ap Llywelyn, who had disinherited and imprisoned the man who was Gwenllïan's brother and Senana's husband. They had a great deal in common and they probably accompanied one another to Westminster. Thus we have two native Welsh noblewomen of the Middle Ages exercising power through networking within the family.

Gwenllïan de Lacy had travelled from Ireland to Wales and then to London for her court appearance in 1241. In June 1278 Gwenllïan was granted permission by the crown to bring for profit from Ireland into Wales and England, corn, victuals and other goods. For this purpose she was granted protection for one year for herself, 'her men, lands, and chattels in Ireland and elsewhere',¹⁴² and probably again travelled to Wales. Gwenllïan also nominated two attorneys to act for her in Ireland from August 30, 1280 until November 1, 1281.¹⁴³ J.E. Lloyd believed that the reason Gwenllïan appointed attorneys to act for her in Ireland in 1280 and 1281 was that she expected to be in residence in Wales.¹⁴⁴ From the available evidence, it seems likely therefore that Gwenllïan travelled between Ireland and Wales a number of times during her lifetime, and it also seems likely that she was in residence in Wales on occasions.

When one considers prevailing contemporary standards, to have retained custody of and maintained both the property which had been bestowed on her at her marriage and her dower property in Ireland, for a period of approximately fifty years of widowhood was an outstanding achievement for a medieval noblewoman. A landowning widow was considered a desirable commodity in the Middle Ages especially with the introduction of male primogeniture, which was

¹⁴¹ *Curia Regis Rolls of Henry III*, vol. XVI, p.311. 'set bene audiverunt quod predicta domina ... dixit, et querelam suam libenter ostendent domino suo et illum rogabant quod exhibeat ei justiciam.'

¹⁴² *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland*, vol. II, p.277. See also *Calendar of Patent Rolls of Edward I, 1272-1281*, p.268.

¹⁴³ *Calendar of Patent Rolls of Edward I, 1273-1281* (London: Kraus reprint, 1971), p.396.

¹⁴⁴ Lloyd, 'Who Was Gwenllïan de Lacy?', p.295.

the method of inheritance brought to Britain by the Normans.¹⁴⁵ Primogeniture saw the inheritance of land by the eldest son of the family and this meant that many younger sons of noble families were obliged to seek the means of their future support outside their families. Marriage to an heiress or a rich widow was a desirable possibility, but Gwenllïan apparently was able to avoid remarriage. That Gwenllïan remained a widow is surprising. Possibly it suited those in power for her to remain so. Gwenllïan held lands in both Ireland and Wales. Perhaps it suited Llywelyn that Gwenllïan remained unmarried. Gwenllïan's marriage to William de Lacy would not have pleased Henry III, and it was possibly also in his interests that she remained unmarried. We will probably never know. On the other hand, three of Llywelyn Fawr's other daughters also were married to Norman lords, and although they too outlived their first husbands, unlike Gwenllïan, all three remarried, once again in each case to Norman lords.

Gwladus Ddu

Gwladus Ddu is one Welsh noblewoman who usually merits more than a footnote by Welsh historians, and when it comes to any mention of her by contemporary and later chroniclers and poets in the various histories, she is almost always referred to by name. Even some modern day historians refer to Gwladus Ddu by name.¹⁴⁶ The Welsh word '*du*' means black and as part of a name, usually describes a person who has dark hair, skin or eyes. Indeed J.E. Lloyd referred to Gwladus as 'the dark-eyed Gwladus'¹⁴⁷ but I do not know whether he actually knew she had dark eyes or whether this was speculation perhaps because this description denoted dark eyes in Wales in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

¹⁴⁵ For discussion of the introduction of primogeniture to Europe see F. & J. Gies, *Marriage and Family in the Middle Ages* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), esp. pp.132, 195.

¹⁴⁶ R.R. Davies did discuss Gwladus in a later work when he explained how the Mortimer supporters based the claim by Edmund Mortimer to the throne of England on descent through Gwladus in the fourteenth century. See R.R. Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.178-79.

¹⁴⁷ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, vol. II, p.645.

As previously stated, Llywelyn Fawr possibly fathered three legitimate daughters by his wife Joan, and for some time I had thought that the eldest of these daughters was Gwladus Ddu. Peter Bartrum's genealogical chart, however, shows Gwladus as an illegitimate daughter, of Tangwystl.¹⁴⁸ In view of the use made of Gwladus's descent from Joan by genealogists and poets in the fourteenth century, to be discussed below, it seems likely that Gwladus was the daughter of Joan.

A marriage for Gwladus was arranged by her father to Reginald de Braose, a Norman baron, in 1215 and it is likely that Gwladus was still a child at this time. This marriage lasted for thirteen years until Reginald de Braose died in 1228. No children were born to Gwladus from this marriage and she may have been about twenty when she became a widow. Gwladus is thought to have accompanied her brother Dafydd when he travelled to London in 1229 to do homage for the lands he would receive on his father's death.¹⁴⁹ If this can be confirmed, it is an instance of a Welsh noblewoman travelling from Wales to London in the company of her brother. Perhaps she was visiting the English court, or there may have been another reason, such as her value as a marriageable widow. One can only speculate about the reason for the visit; perhaps social, perhaps political, or both. Presumably if her mother were the daughter of King John, Gwladus would have had some personal close links with the English court, added to which would be her responsibilities as the widow of an Anglo-Norman baron.

Gwladus is visible in the legal historical records as being actively involved in litigation and with the administration of her estates. In March 1230, as widow of Reginald de Braose, she appointed attorneys against William de Braose, her stepson, and also against Hugh of Croft III and others.¹⁵⁰ Again as the widow of Reginald de Braose Gwladus complained against Humphrey de

¹⁴⁸ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, vol. 3, p.446.

¹⁴⁹ Crump 'The Mortimer Family and the Making of the March', p.124. *Calendar of Patent Rolls of Henry III, 2, 1225-1232* (London: Kraus reprint, 1971), p.263.

¹⁵⁰ *Calendar of Close Rolls of Henry III, 1227-31* (London: Kraus reprint, 1970), pp.389-90.

Bohun, earl of Hereford, concerning her dower of the lands and tenements of her husband. Gwladus was granted her third part of the property and also damages.¹⁵¹

After three years of widowhood, Gwladus married another marcher baron, Ralph Mortimer, in 1230. This marriage, which lasted for sixteen years, produced at least three children (probably four), the most notable of whom was Roger Mortimer of Wigmore. Genealogies usually show the children of Gwladus and Ralph Mortimer as Roger, the heir, a daughter Joan and Hugh, but the *Fundationis et Fundatorum Historia* of Wigmore Abbey in *Monasticon Anglicanum* mentions another son 'Petrum Johannem fratrem ordinis Minorum, domus sive contentus Salopie.'¹⁵² (Peter John brother of the order of Minorites, a house or enclosed order in Shropshire). So it seems as though Gwladus in fact had four children, one of whom entered the church.

The 'Black Book of Wigmore' for Presteigne contains two undated deeds in the name of Gwladus. These were drawn up presumably when she was either wife or widow of Ralph Mortimer, her second husband. The first is a grant to 'Lady Gladys Mortimer of the homage and service of William de la Rode' and the second is for the 'sale and quitclaim ... to lady Gladys Mortimer of the homage of Walter etc. ... of the manor of Presteigne.' The annual rent for the first of these two deeds was 'one certain rose on the feast of St John the Baptist',¹⁵³ which was a not unusual token rent in the Middle Ages.

In 1242, Ralph and Gwladus together appointed Roger of Hosefeud or Philip son of Alan to act in their place against the earl of Hereford concerning pleas of land and dower.¹⁵⁴ In 1246, though, as mentioned above, Gwladus was the widow of Ralph Mortimer, and the king ordered the earl of Hereford to give

¹⁵¹ *Welsh Assize Roll, 1277-84*, J. Conway Davies, ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1940) pp.23-4.

¹⁵² *Monasticon Anglicanum*, VI, I, W. Dugdale, ed. (2nd edn., 1817-30), p.350. See also R.W. Eyton *Antiquities of Shropshire*, vol. III (London: John Russell Smith, 1854), pp.38 & 44.

¹⁵³ R. Nicol, 'The Black Book of Wigmore' (Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Sydney, 1974), pp. 187-88.

¹⁵⁴ *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, 1243-1245, Vol. XVIII* (London: 1978), p.62.

Gwladus seisin of her dower from Reginald de Braose.¹⁵⁵ In this same document the king granted Gwladus the manors of Stretfield and Chaumers, etc.¹⁵⁶ An assignment of dower for Gwladus was also ordered of the escheator, Henry de Wingham, of the lands she held from Ralph Mortimer.¹⁵⁷

The Welsh chroniclers noted that Gwladus Ddu died in 1251 at Windsor.¹⁵⁸ She had been a widow since Ralph Mortimer's death in 1246. It is interesting to speculate as to why Gwladus should have been in Windsor when she died. The king granted Gwladus her dower property of the manor of Stretfield and part of the honour of Bisleg, Gloucestershire, soon after Ralph's death,¹⁵⁹ so presumably Gwladus was living in England and not Wales, after her son Roger, now lord of Wigmore, had married Maud de Braose in 1247.

Gwladus Ddu is certainly the exception for a Welsh noblewoman when it comes to references to her in genealogies, chronicles and poetry. In the fourteenth century, Edmund Mortimer was said to have reinforced his claim to the English throne in the event of the failure of heirs of the Black Prince with evidence of his descent, through Gwladus Ddu, from Welsh princes and Geoffrey of Monmouth's kings of Britain.¹⁶⁰ Mary Giffin's study of the Wigmore Manuscript shows the use of legends for political purposes in England from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. It contains a genealogy of the Mortimer family which was apparently prepared to advance their claim to the throne in the fourteenth century. According to Giffin 'a beautifully rubricated genealogy of Gwladusa makes clear her descent from Cadwalader, Arthur and Brutus'.¹⁶¹ *The*

¹⁵⁵ *Calendar of Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, 1242-1247* (London: Kraus Reprint, 1970), p.453.

¹⁵⁶ *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1242-1247*, pp.452-453.

¹⁵⁷ *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1242-1247*, p.484 & 486.

¹⁵⁸ *Brut y Tywysogion or The Chronicle of the Princes. Peniarth Ms. 20 version*, T. Jones, ed. & trans. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1952), p.109.

¹⁵⁹ L.E. Mitchell, 'Noble Widowhood in the Thirteenth Century, Three Generations of Mortimer Widows, 1246-1334' in L. Mirror, ed., *Upon my Husband's Death: Widows in the Literature and Histories of Medieval Europe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), p.176.

¹⁶⁰ G.A. Holmes, *The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p.18.

¹⁶¹ M.E. Giffin, 'Cadwalader, Arthur, and Brutus in the Wigmore Manuscript', *Speculum* vol. XVI (1941), p.111.

Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421 mentions the descent of Roger Mortimer, the earl of March, 1394-8, from 'Gladws Duy, the daughter of Llewellyn ap Iorwerth Drwyndwn prince of North Wales ...', going back to 'Adam the first creature'. The editor and translator of *The Chronicle of Adam Usk* says that the genealogy of Roger Mortimer is based on ancient Welsh traditions as preserved in works such as *The Life of Gruffydd ap Cynan* and the Wigmore chronicle.¹⁶² Adam of Usk also mentioned Roger Mortimer's descent from Gwladus Ddu through her mother Joan to the 'first conqueror of Normandy' and referred to her 'glorious descent from the noble kings of Britain, Italy, Troy, England, France, and Spain'.¹⁶³ This emphasis on Gwladus's 'glorious descent' further strengthens the argument that she was indeed the daughter of Joan and not illegitimate as indicated by Bartrum.

The Welsh bard Guto'r Glyn, writing in the fifteenth century, referred to Gwladus by name in his praise *cywydd* to Edward IV 'I'r Brennin Edward'. The following lines exhort Edward Mortimer to

Turn your power to your grandmother's race
From the wine-giving king of Castile;
Dark Gwladys you are called by your style ...¹⁶⁴

Clearly, Gwladus was considered by some to have impeccable credentials. Another poem by Guto'r Glyn 'I Wiliam Talbod' makes mention of the significance of descent from Gwladus Ddu.¹⁶⁵

The question of the identity of Gwladus's mother must be addressed. Clearly from the foregoing, the Welsh bards, the Mortimer family and the chronicler Adam of Usk all believed she was the daughter of Joan. There was no doubt that Gwladus was Llywelyn's daughter, and her grand descent from the kings of Britain was claimed. While Gwladus's paternal ancestry might have

¹⁶² *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, C. Given-Wilson, ed. and trans. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp.40-1.

¹⁶³ *The Chronicle of Adam Usk*, p.43.

¹⁶⁴ *Gwaith Guto'r Glyn*, Collected by J.L. Williams, I. Williams, ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1939), p.157.

¹⁶⁵ *Gwaith Guto'r Glyn*, p.77.

been thought sufficient to make these claims in the fifteenth century, in the poem to Edward IV, Adam of Usk writing in the late fourteenth century specifically stated that she was descended through her mother Joan from 'the first conqueror of Normandy' and so on. Clearly, for the Mortimers, it was Gwladus's descent from Joan, the daughter of King John, which counted.

From the very little evidence available, it is difficult to build a profile of the everyday life of a woman like Gwladus, but if her mother were Joan, who was the daughter of King John and therefore a granddaughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine, presumably she would have been well educated for a woman of this time. It is reasonable to assume that Joan would have been brought up in an environment which for the time would have been conducive to some education and culture, and that her daughters would have had similar advantages. Presumably Gwladus would have spoken both Welsh and French, perhaps some English. The Welsh courts encouraged cultural pursuits and the bards were very important members of the royal household. J.E. Lloyd has said that

the age of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth was one of brilliant literary achievement in Wales. Ten bards are known from this period including Cynddelw, Llywarch ap Llywelyn and Dafydd Benfras. As well as the work of known authors, much anonymous literature, both in verse and in prose, undoubtedly came into being during this productive age. The earliest known manuscript of *The Four Branches of the Mabinogi* was written in the age of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth.¹⁶⁶

Gwladus would eventually become the subject of Welsh bardic poetry, but what would her experience have been of Welsh tradition, of Welsh cultural pursuits? E.J. Dobson speculated that Eleanor de Braose, the widow of Hugh Mortimer (d.1227), was the person for whom a French translation of *Ancrene Wisse*, an instructional book for women which is thought to have been associated with Wigmore Abbey, was commissioned. When Gwladus married Ralph Mortimer, who was Hugh Mortimer's heir, in 1230, she would have replaced Eleanor as the lady of Wigmore castle and Dobson uses the argument that 'no-

¹⁶⁶ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, vol II, pp.691-2.

one else except Eleanor's new sister-in-law Gwladys Ddu would have had such a claim for special consideration for a French translation at this time.' His argument against Gwladus is that she did not become an anchorite and her languages were presumably Welsh first and French second.¹⁶⁷ Dobson's arguments with regard to Eleanor are probably quite reasonable, but Gwladus could have been quite fluent in French as her mother would have spoken French, which was the language of the court in the thirteenth century, and she was married at a very young age to one Norman baron and later to another. I am not arguing that the *Ancrene Wisse* was written for Gwladus, but I do not think she should have been precluded only on the grounds of French as a second language. Given the literary achievements of the thirteenth century in Wales and in Europe generally, it seems a fair assumption that Gwladus Ddu lived in a reasonably cultured atmosphere for its time, and insofar as women were encouraged at all in education and the arts, could have had access to what was available in the thirteenth century. Unfortunately this is speculation due to a lack of evidence.

Elen

At about the time Llywelyn Fawr was arranging the marriage of Gwenllïan to William de Lacy in 1222, he also arranged the marriage of another legitimate daughter Elen (or Helen) to John le Scot. Chris Given-Wilson and Alice Curteis mention Joan's marriage to Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and state that 'Joan's own children were David and Ellen' and that 'Joan's two stepdaughters were called Gladys and Margaret'.¹⁶⁸ The authors give no references for this statement so that it is not possible to know from where they obtained this information.

John le Scot was Earl of Huntingdon and Cambridge. Llywelyn's motivation for arranging this marriage for Elen was that John le Scot was the

¹⁶⁷ E.J. Dobson, *The Origins of Ancrene Wisse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp.307-8.

¹⁶⁸ C. Given-Wilson and A. Curteis, *The Royal Bastards of Medieval England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), p.129.

nephew and heir of Ranulf, the earl of Chester, and the close proximity of Chester to north Wales made this alliance very important politically. The chronicle of Ranulf of Higden stressed the political significance of this marriage when it stated that John le Scot took as his wife the daughter of Llywelyn prince of Wales, 'as for final concord between Llewelyn and his uncle Ranulf earl of Chester'.¹⁶⁹ On the occasion of the marriage Ranulf, the earl of Chester, gave John a grant of lands in Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire, as well as a thousand silver pounds and other considerations.¹⁷⁰ Indeed John le Scot duly became earl of Chester in 1232. The choice of John le Scot as a husband for Elen may have also been motivated by the fact that at the time he was 'heir-presumptive' to King Alexander II of Scotland.¹⁷¹ Strategically therefore, this marriage was a very important arrangement for Llywelyn. The records show that John le Scot died in 1237 without issue, so that Elen had no children from her first marriage, and because John le Scot died without an heir, his lands reverted to the crown.¹⁷² As we shall see, however, Elen received dower lands after his death.

Elen remarried shortly after her first husband's death in 1237. According to Matthew Paris Elen poisoned her first husband.¹⁷³ The Dunstable Analyst for 1237 stated that the daughter of Llywelyn had married Robert de Quincy and that this had angered her father (*Lewelinus indignatus est*).¹⁷⁴ There is no way of corroborating that Elen poisoned her first husband, but it is certainly an intriguing

¹⁶⁹ *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis*, J.R. Lumby, ed., vol. VIII (London: 1882), pp.200-202, 'Johannes filius David comitis de Scotia duxit in uxorem filiam Lewelini principis Walliae tanquam pro finali concordia inter ipsum Lewelinum et avunculum suum Ranulphum comitem Cestrensem.'

¹⁷⁰ J.W. Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester: A Relic of the Conquest* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1983), p.82.

¹⁷¹ M. Brown, 'Henry the Peaceable: Henry III, Alexander III and Royal Lordship in the British Isles, 1249-1272' in B.K.J. Weiler, ed. with I.W. Rowlands, *England and Europe in the Reign of Henry III (1216-1272)* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), p.62, n.4.

¹⁷² Williams, *An Introduction to the History of Wales*, vol. II, p.81.

¹⁷³ *Matthew Paris, Chronica Majora*, vol. III, 1216-1239, H.R. Luard, ed. (London: 1876), p.394. 'Et circa illos dies come's Cestriae Johannes, cognomento Scotus, uxore sua, filia Leolini, machinante, potionatus diem clausit extremum.'

¹⁷⁴ *Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia, Annales Monastici, Vol. III*, H.R. Luard, ed. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1866) p.146.

idea. Robert de Quincy was a younger son of the earl of Winchester and the wife of his eldest brother was a sister of John le Scot's mother.¹⁷⁵ A.J. Roderick, in his paper outlining the political significance of the marriages between members of the principal Welsh ruling families between 1066 and 1282, postulated that since Elen 'must have met Robert during her first husband's lifetime,' and in light of her father's disapproval, this may have been a rare occasion of emotional attachment. He also raised the question of whether this might have been 'rebellion against being used as a political pawn.'¹⁷⁶ No doubt Elen's remarriage was not in her father's interests and that was the reason why he was angry.

Elen received dower lands upon the death of her first husband and evidence of this appears in the various printed legal records. *The Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* of 1222 and 1223 mention Elen several times in connection with litigation concerning Giles de Erdington and the manor of Wellington.¹⁷⁷ According to R.W. Eyton, Ostricius, who was Llywelyn ab Iorwerth's clerk, defended Elen's title and 'called the King's Council to warranty' and it appears that although the matter continued for some years it was finally resolved in Giles de Erdington's favour before 1229.¹⁷⁸ Again Elen was mentioned as the wife of Robert de Quincy in the *Curia Regis Rolls* of 1242 trying to recover her dower lands, in an action against Isabella de Bruce, who was the wife of Robert de Bruce. The king had ordered that Isabella de Bruce make satisfaction to Robert de Quincy and his wife concerning the dower which Elen ought to hold from the lands which belonged to John le Scot, Elen's previous husband, the former earl of Chester, and for which lands the king had made an exchange for Isabella. Evidently Isabella had not done as ordered, and ignored

¹⁷⁵ G.E. Cokayne, ed., *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, XII:2* (London: 1950), p.751.

¹⁷⁶ Roderick, 'Marriage and Politics in Wales, 1066-1282', p.18.

¹⁷⁷ *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry, 1223* (London: 1955), pp.227 & 428, Also *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, 1222* (London: 1971), p.280.

¹⁷⁸ Eyton, *Antiquities of Shropshire*, vol. III, p.29, vol. IX, p.43.

the summons. The king then commanded that 'the third part of Writel and of Hatfeld' Regis be siezed etc.'¹⁷⁹

Elen apparently died in 1253 because the *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem* for 1253 refers to the partitioning of Elen's dower lands from her marriage to John le Scot between the earl's heirs, Sir John Baliol, Robert de Bruce and Henry de Hastings.¹⁸⁰ She held a third part of the manor of Tygden in dower as the countess of Chester,¹⁸¹ and was also mentioned several times in the Close Rolls for 1253 in relation to disposal of her lands 'post mortem'.¹⁸²

Robert de Quincy died in 1257. According to Sidney Painter, he and Elen had two daughters, Joan and Hawise.¹⁸³ Joan, who was probably named after her grandmother, married Humphrey de Bohun, son of the earl of Hereford. Elen's daughters are mentioned in the legal record following the battle of Evesham in 1265 and the restoration of Henry III. Joan's husband, Humphrey de Bohun, the earl of Hereford, had supported Simon de Montfort in the rebellion and his lands were forfeit.¹⁸⁴ In 1264 Joan was aged nineteen and her sister Hawise was fourteen.

We know that Elen was definitely Joan's daughter. When Elen married John le Scot, it suited Llywelyn's purposes because John was the heir of the earl of Chester, who was an ally. Elen duly became the countess of Chester, which would have been a position of some status. This marriage probably did not please Henry III. John le Scot was also for a time the heir of King Alexander II of Scotland, and it is unlikely that the crown would have wished for an alliance between Wales and Scotland, even if Elen were Henry's niece. Llywelyn may

¹⁷⁹ *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, vol. XVI, 1237-1242 (London: 1978), pp.379-80. 'Dominus rex mandavit Isabelle de Brus quod satisfaceret Roberto de Quency et uxori ejus de dote predictae uxoris ipsius R. quam habere debet de terris que fuerunt J. quondam comitis Cestr' quondam viri sui, ...'

¹⁸⁰ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, vol. I, Henry III (London: 1904), p.82. '... quod Elena quondam comitissa Cestr' tenuit terciam partem ...'

¹⁸¹ *Calendar of Close Rolls of Henry III, 1251-1253* (London: 1927), p.423.

¹⁸² *Calendar of Close Rolls of Henry III, 1251-1253* (London: 1927), pp.410-414.

¹⁸³ S. Painter 'The House of Quency', *Medievalia et Humanistica XI* (Boulder Colorado: 1957), p.6.

¹⁸⁴ *Calendar of Patent Rolls of Henry III, 1258-1266* (London: 1910), p.504.

have had other plans for Elen, which her marriage to Robert de Quincy negated. It is also possible that Henry would have had no objections to this second marriage, as it removed Elen's usefulness to Llywelyn. We will probably never know.

Margaret

Llywelyn ab Iorwerth's fourth daughter was Margaret, who was probably born somewhere between 1208 and 1212. Margaret was married to John de Braose in 1219. He was the nephew of Reginald de Braose, Gwladus's first husband. By 1219 Llywelyn and his son-in-law Reginald were no longer allies, and it is thought that Llywelyn had arranged this marriage of Margaret to John in order to harass Reginald.¹⁸⁵ This marriage lasted thirteen years, as John de Braose died in 1232. He was killed in a fall from his horse. The *Brut* tells us that 'John de Breos died of a cruel death, mangled by his horse.'¹⁸⁶ There were no children from this marriage and Margaret was granted her dower promptly after her husband's death.¹⁸⁷

Margaret next married Walter Clifford of Llandovery soon after her first husband died.¹⁸⁸ This marriage lasted for 31 years until 1263 when Walter Clifford died. Walter Clifford joined the rebellion of 1233-34 against the crown and there is some confusion amongst historians as to what his motivation was for taking this action. Nicholas Vincent is at a loss to understand why Clifford should have joined the rebellion of Richard Marshal, as he did not seem to have the same grievances as other participants. He postulates that as Clifford was 'later to marry Margaret' that he may have had a 'prior association' with her and that this may have led him to join the rebels who were allied with her father when he of course took the opportunity presented by the rebellion to make territorial

¹⁸⁵ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, vol. II, p. 658.

¹⁸⁶ *Brut y Tywysogion: Red Book of Hergest Version*, p.231.

¹⁸⁷ *Calendar of Patent Rolls of Henry III, 1225-1232*, p.491.

¹⁸⁸ Roderick, 'Marriage and Politics in Wales, 1066-1282', p.17.

gains.¹⁸⁹ As I will mention elsewhere, R.F. Walker has also commented on the lack of a sufficient reason for Walter Clifford to join Richard Marshal.¹⁹⁰ The Calendar of *Patent Rolls* has an entry dated July 16, 1232 which refers to the 'recent' death of John de Braose.¹⁹¹ A.J. Roderick stated that Margaret remarried 'soon after' his death. Walter Clifford had therefore probably married Margaret in 1232 and that would explain his joining the rebellion on the side of his father-in-law in 1233. For Llywelyn this marriage of his daughter to Walter Clifford represented an important alliance with a marcher baron at a time when Llywelyn was consolidating his influence in the south-eastern march, which was always a strategically important border area between England and Wales.

Michael Sheehan includes an extract from a charter made by Margaret dated December 16, 1263 in his 1963 study of *The Will in Medieval England*.¹⁹² The charter comes under the heading of 'Selected documents concerning the bequest of property,' and is an example of an irrevocable bequest. Margaret made this charter shortly after her second husband's death. The document stated that Margaret bestowed her heart for burial in Aconbury Priory church near Hereford. It also contains an irrevocable bequest to the house of fifteen marks and funeral expenses. The rationale given by Margaret in this charter to explain the irrevocability of the bequest was in case of forgetfulness (*si forte per oblivionem*) or for any other reason, she contravened the donation. There are several interesting pieces of information contained in this charter. Firstly, Margaret stated that the alms, and the funeral expenses for completing the rites concerning the burial of her heart, were to be taken from 'the goods which belong

¹⁸⁹ N. Vincent, *Peter des Roches: An alien in English politics, 1205-1238* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.380-81.

¹⁹⁰ R.F. Walker, 'The Supporters of Richard Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, in the Rebellion of 1233-1234', *The Welsh History Review*, 17 (1994-95), pp.41-65, esp. pp.42-44 and pp.54-55. Also Chapter 4, 'Maud Clifford'.

¹⁹¹ *Calendar of Patent Rolls of Henry III, 1225-1232*, vol. II (London: Kraus Reprint, 1971), p.490.

¹⁹² M. Sheehan, *The Will in Medieval England* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1963), Appendix B. The full text of the charter is found under Priory of Aconbury in *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. VI, pp.490-91.

to me'.¹⁹³ Secondly, Margaret must have made a will, as she refers to the fact that these arrangements were to be carried out 'according to the discreet prudence of my executors established in my last will'. So it would seem that Margaret was to pay for the funeral rites for the burial of her heart from her 'movable goods', but more importantly we have a Welsh noblewoman who made a will. Strangely, although this particular document is the first item in Appendix B to Sheehan's work of 'Selected Documents Concerning the Bequest of Property', I can find no reference either to Margaret or her charter in the whole book. Perhaps he felt it required no explanation for anticipated users of the material, but it is disappointing from the viewpoint of research into the life of the woman who originated the bequest. This document also provides another example of the different ways one may look at a document. For Sheehan it was apparently merely an example of an irrevocable bequest, whereas for this writer it provides a small piece of evidence of a personal nature about Margaret. It is also evidence of one thirteenth-century Welsh noblewoman who apparently had a will, and also shows her connection with the Priory church of Aconbury in Hereford.

Sir Walter Clifford and Margaret had only one child, a daughter named Maud, who found a significant place among the footnotes to the narrative of Welsh history of the Middle Ages. Margaret herself was still alive in 1271 because a writ dated July 26, 1272 mentioned the manor of Culmetone which Margaret had recovered on August 28, 1271. This writ mentions Sir Roger Clifford the elder, who had apparently taken the manor and held it until 1270, and a Sir Roger Clifford the younger, who had then taken possession until it was recovered by Margaret in 1271.¹⁹⁴ Sir Roger Clifford the elder was a nephew of

¹⁹³ Sheehan, *The Will in Medieval England*, Appendix B. 'Et cum dicto corde meo in elemosinam, quindecim marcas sterlingorum eidem domui celerius persolvendas una cum aliis expensis, de bonis que me contingunt honorabiliter ad exequias circa predictum cor meum sepeliendum perficiendas, secundum discretam prudenciam executorum meorum in ultima voluntate mea constituendum.'

¹⁹⁴ *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, 1216-1422* (London: 1916-68), p.132.

Sir Walter Clifford and Sir Roger Clifford the younger was his (Sir Roger's) son.¹⁹⁵

Margaret de Clifford is also mentioned in the *Calendar of Welsh Rolls* for June 16, 1278. The king had appointed Walter de Hopton, Gronw ap Heilyn, Hywel ap Meurig and Rhys ap Gruffudd to hear and determine all suits and pleas etc. in the marches and in Wales and 'to do justice according to the laws and customs of those parts'. Among others he ordered the bailiffs of Margaret de Clifford in Cantref Selyf to come before the justices. This may possibly be a clerical error, because Margaret's daughter Maud was in possession of Cantref Selyf in 1263 following her father's death.¹⁹⁶ It should therefore probably read 'the bailiffs of Maud de Clifford in Cantref Selyf'.¹⁹⁷ It is entirely possible that Margaret still lived in Cantref Selyf, even if it was now owned by Maud. Margaret is mentioned again in the Assize Roll in 1278, at Essoins taken before Walter de Hopton. 'Hugh Turbervill against Margaret de Clifford for covenant and trespass by Roger de Pedwardin.' This plea is followed by 'Roger Pychard against 'the same' [Margaret de Clifford] by Llywelyn ap Philip.' Originally I thought this too must be an error and that Maud should be mentioned instead. However, the next item on the list is 'Robert Maynard, attorney of Matilda, wife of John Giffard, against Morgan ap Maredudd in a plea of land by William apine.' Margaret may indeed have still been alive in 1278. If she were born between 1208 and 1212 as I have suggested, this would make her possibly in her late sixties in 1278. I do not know the exact date of her death, but once again she lived a long life for a medieval woman.

Angharad

Angharad was not mentioned by R.R. Davies at all, nor did J.E. Lloyd have any reference for her. Peter Bartrum places her in the genealogical chart for

¹⁹⁵ Eyton, *Antiquities of Shropshire*, vol. V, p.147.

¹⁹⁶ *Calendar of Ancient Correspondence*, p.17.

¹⁹⁷ *Calendar of Welsh Rolls, Calendar of Chancery Rolls Various 1277-1326* (London: 1976), p.167. The editor of the *Welsh Assize Roll* also mentions this entry. p.88.

Llywelyn ab Iorwerth as an illegitimate daughter and he shows her as married to Maelgwn Ieuan or Fychan, of Deheubarth.¹⁹⁸ This conflicts with a story by R.R. Davies that Maelgwn Fychan was compelled by Gilbert Marshal to take his daughter in marriage in the early 1240s.¹⁹⁹ Gwyn A. Williams mentioned this same incident in a paper titled 'The succession to Gwynedd 1238-47', but his version was that Maelgwn Fychan was forced 'to pledge his son's marriage to the earl's daughter'.²⁰⁰ If it were indeed the son, and not Maelgwn Fychan himself who was compelled to marry the earl's daughter, then Angharad was probably married to Maelgwn Fychan. A family connection with Llywelyn ab Iorwerth is feasible, because in 1233 Maelgwn Fychan joined Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and the earl of Pembroke when they laid siege to Carmarthen.²⁰¹ Maelgwn Fychan, who died in 1257, was the son of Maelgwn ap Rhys ap Gruffudd (the Lord Rhys) of Deheubarth, and as a direct descendant of a Welsh ruling house would have been eminently suitable as a husband for a daughter of the ruler of Gwynedd. We must also consider that if the information in Bartrum is correct and Angharad was indeed Llywelyn ab Iorwerth's daughter and did marry Maelgwn Fychan, then Robin Frame is incorrect when he asserts that Llywelyn ab Iorwerth did not marry his daughters to Welshmen.²⁰²

There is a reference to Angharad as the daughter of Llywelyn in *Littere Wallie*. A letter said to be dated February 24, 1259 from Rhys Fychan, son of Rhys ap Maelgwn which gave sureties for £60 to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was for villas which had belonged to Angharad the daughter of Llywelyn.²⁰³ Angharad and Maelgwn Fychan had a son named Rhys (d.1255) and a grandson named Rhys Fychan (d.1302) and there is a strong case that this reference in *Littere Wallie* is to Angharad the daughter of Llywelyn Fawr. This being the case, we have here another Welsh noblewoman who held land. I do not know the date of

¹⁹⁸ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, vol. 3, p.446.

¹⁹⁹ Davies, *Conquest, Co-existence, and Change*, p.226 & 301.

²⁰⁰ Williams 'The Succession to Gwynedd 1238-47', pp.393-413.

²⁰¹ *Brut y Tywysogion, Red Book of Hergest Version*, p.233 and also *Peniarth MS. Version*, p.103.

²⁰² See p.46 above.

²⁰³ *Littere Wallie*, p.26. '... pro uillis que fuerunt bone memorie Angarad filie Lewelini,'.

Angharad's death, but her husband died in 1257. As the above letter was dated 1259, the villis therefore could have been either given to her as part of a marriage contract, or she may have received dower on the death of her husband. J. Beverley Smith also refers to Angharad the daughter of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth in a footnote to his paper titled 'Dower in Thirteenth-Century Wales: a Grant of the Commote of Anhuniog, 1273'²⁰⁴ in a discussion concerning her granddaughter, also named Angharad.

The political advantage derived as a result of the arranged marriages of Llywelyn Fawr's daughters to Anglo-Normans was shortlived in each instance. There can be no doubt that such advantage was the primary reason for each alliance, and although the gain was of short duration, the result was probably accepted as fairly standard at this time in history. These marriages were important from the points of view of Llywelyn, of Henry III and of the marcher families. For Henry III, the reigning Angevin king, he was determined to rule all of England and Wales and the marriages were part of what might be called the 'legitimation of the conquest'. Such marriages into ruling marcher families were part of this continuing trend since the coming of the conquerors. As Wales was not finally conquered until 1283, these marriages of the daughters of the ruling house of Gwynedd to Anglo-Norman barons were part of the more peaceful means of gaining legitimate control through inheritance of the lands of Wales. From the point of view of the marcher families the marriages helped with the process of building their power bases any way they could. For a marcher family like the Mortimers, the marriage of Ralph Mortimer to Gwladus Ddu gave the Mortimers a firm foothold in a strategic area of the march which enabled them to build on this to become a leading baronial family for centuries to come. In fact Gwladus's grandson Roger became, for a short period in the fourteenth century, the ruler of England.

In conclusion it appears that Gwenllïan, Gwladus, Elen, Margaret and Angharad lived long and seemingly full lives which included at times protecting and furthering the interests of their families. Another interesting aspect of their lives is the longevity of these women and the fact that for the most part they outlived all of their husbands. The children of all of these women became established in the Anglo-Norman power bloc and eventually part of the English nobility. Through Llywelyn's own adventure into marriage into the Anglo-Norman world, those grandchildren who resulted from the mixed marriage became great-grandchildren of King John. Although the information at first seems hidden, it can be found. The activity of looking at history without gender blindness will mean that these and other Welsh noblewomen will take their rightful place in the narrative of the history of Wales in the thirteenth century.

²⁰⁴ J.B. Smith, 'Dower in Thirteenth-Century Wales: a Grant of the Commote of Anhuniog, 1273', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, Vol. XXX (1983), p.351, footnote 5.