

‘Gwalch Cywyddau Gwŷr’

YSGRIFAU AR GUTO’R GLYN A CHYMRU’R BYMTHEGFED GANRIF
ESSAYS ON GUTO’R GLYN AND FIFTEENTH-CENTURY WALES

golygwyd gan / edited by
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ABERYSTWYTH
CANOLFAN UWCHEFRYDIAU CYMREIG A CHELTAIDD
PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
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Byrfoddau / Abbreviations

Llyfryddol / Bibliographical

Arch Camb	<i>Archaeologia Cambrensis</i> , 1846–
ASCent	M. Paul Bryant-Quinn (gol.), <i>Apocryffa Siôn Cent</i> (Aberystwyth, 2004)
AAST	<i>Anglesey Antiquarian Society and Field Club Transactions</i> , 1913–
B	<i>Bwletin y Bwrdd Gwybodaeth Celtaidd</i> , 1921–93
Ba	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Prifysgol Cymru, Bangor
Ba (M)	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Bangor (Mostyn) ym Mhrifysgol Cymru, Bangor
BL Add	Llawysgrifau Ychwanegol yng nghasgliad y Llyfrgell Brydeinig, Llundain / The Additional Manuscripts in the British Library, London
Bl BGCC	<i>Blodeugerdd Barddas o Ganu Crefyddol Cynnar</i> , gol. M. Haycock (Llandybïe, 1994)
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
Bod	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Bodewryd, yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Abersytwyth / A manuscript in the Bodewryd collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
BodW	Llawysgrif Gymreig yng nghasgliad Llyfrgell Bodley, Rhydychen / A Welsh manuscript in the Bodleian Library, Oxford
Bren Saes	Thomas Jones (gol.), <i>Brenhinedd y Saesson</i> (Caerdydd, 1971)
BritishHO	British History Online < http://www.british-history.ac.uk >
BrM	Ifor Williams (gol.), <i>Breuddwyd Maxen</i> (Bangor, 1908)

BrM ²	Brynley F. Roberts (ed.), <i>Breudwyt Maxen Wledic</i> (Dublin, 2005)
Brog	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Brogyntyn, yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth / A manuscript in the Brogyntyn collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
BRh	Melville Richards (gol.), <i>Breudwyt Ronabwy</i> (Caerdydd, 1948)
BT	Thomas Jones (gol.), <i>Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth Ms. 20</i> (Caerdydd, 1941)
ByCy Ar-lein	‘Y Bywgraffiadur Ar-lein’ < http://yba.llgc.org.uk/cy/index.html >
C	Llawysgrif yn Llyfrgell Ganolog Caerdydd / A manuscript in Cardiff Central Library
CCR	<i>Calendar of the close rolls preserved in the Public Record Office [1272–1509]</i> (London, 1900–63)
CChR	<i>Calendar of Charter Rolls preserved in the Record Office</i> (London, 1903–27)
CM	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Cwrtmawr, yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth / A manuscript in the Cwrtmawr collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
CMCS	<i>Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies</i> , 1981–1993; <i>Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies</i> , 1993–
CO ³	<i>Culhwch ac Olwen</i> , gol. Rachel Bromwich a D. Simon Evans gyda chymorth D.H. Evans (Caerdydd, 1997)
CPR	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls preserved in the Record Office</i> (London, 1891–1986)
CTC	Catrin T. Beynon Davies, ‘Cerddi’r Tai Crefydd’ (M.A., Cymru [Bangor], 1973)
Cylchg CHSFeir	<i>Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes a Chofnodion Sir Feirion(n)ydd</i> , 1949–
Cylchg HC	<i>Cylchgrawn Hanes Cymru</i> , 1960–
Cylchg LlGC	<i>Cylchgrawn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru</i> , 1939–
DE	Thomas Roberts (gol.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd ab Edmwnd</i> (Bangor, 1914)

DG.net	'Dafydd ap Gwilym.net' < http://www.dafyddapgwilym.net >
DN	Thomas Roberts and Ifor Williams (eds.), <i>The Poetical Works of Dafydd Nanmor</i> (Cardiff and London, 1923)
DNB ²	H.C.G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds.), <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford, 2004)
DNB Online	'Oxford Dictionary of National Biography' < http://www.oxforddnb.com/ >
DWB	J.E. Lloyd and R.T. Jenkins (eds.), <i>The Dictionary of Welsh Biography Down to 1940</i> (London, 1959)
DWH	Michael Powell Siddons, <i>The Development of Welsh Heraldry</i> (4 vols., Aberystwyth, 1991–3, 2007)
Études	<i>Études celtiques</i> , 1936–
GBDd	<i>Gwaith Bleddyn Ddu</i> , gol. R. Iestyn Daniel (Aberystwyth, 1994)
GBF	Rhian M. Andrews et al. (goln.), <i>Gwaith Bleddyn Fardd a Beirdd Eraill Ail Hanner y Drydedd Ganrif ar Ddeg</i> (Caerdydd, 1996)
GC	R. Iestyn Daniel (gol.), <i>Gwaith Casnodyn</i> (Aberystwyth, 1999)
GCBM i	Nerys Ann Jones ac Ann Parry Owen (goln.), <i>Gwaith Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr</i> , i (Caerdydd, 1991)
GCBM ii	Nerys Ann Jones ac Ann Parry Owen (goln.), <i>Gwaith Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr</i> , ii (Caerdydd, 1995)
GDB	N.G. Costigan (Bosco) et al. (goln.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd Benfras ac Eraill o Feirdd Hanner Cyntaf y Drydedd Ganrif ar Ddeg</i> (Caerdydd, 1995)
GDC	R. Iestyn Daniel (gol.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd y Coed a beirdd eraill o Lyfr Coch Hergest</i> (Aberystwyth, 2002)
GDEp	Owen Thomas (gol.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd Epynt</i> (Aberystwyth, 2002)

GDG ³	Thomas Parry (gol.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym</i> (trydydd arg., Caerdydd, 1979)
GDGor	Erwain H. Rheinallt (gol.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd Gorlech</i> (Aberystwyth, 1997)
GDID	A. Eleri Davies (gol.), <i>Gwaith Deio ab Ieuan Du a Gwilym ab Ieuan Hen</i> (Caerdydd, 1992)
GDLI	W. Leslie Richards (gol.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd Llwyd o Fathafarn</i> (Caerdydd, 1964)
GEO	R. Geraint Gruffydd a Rhiannon Ifans (goln.), <i>Gwaith Einion Offeiriad a Dafydd Ddu o Hiraddug</i> , gol. (Aberystwyth, 1997)
GGDT	N.G. Costigan (Bosco) <i>et al.</i> (goln.), <i>Gwaith Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur, Gwilym Ddu o Arfon, Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr ac Iorwerth Beli</i> (Aberystwyth, 1995)
GGGr	Barry J. Lewis ac Eurig Salisbury (goln.), <i>Gwaith Gruffudd Gryg</i> (Aberystwyth 2010)
GGH	D.J. Bowen (gol.), <i>Gwaith Gruffudd Hiraethog</i> (Caerdydd, 1990)
GGI	J. Llywelyn Williams ac Ifor Williams (goln.), <i>Gwaith Guto'r Glyn</i> (Caerdydd, 1939)
GGI ²	J. Llywelyn Williams ac Ifor Williams (goln.), <i>Gwaith Guto'r Glyn</i> (ail arg., Caerdydd, 1961)
GGLI	Rhiannon Ifans (gol.), <i>Gwaith Gruffudd Llwyd a'r Llygliwiaid Eraill</i> (Aberystwyth, 2000)
GGM	<i>Gwaith Gwerful Mechain ac Eraill</i> , gol. Nerys Howells (Aberystwyth, 2001)
GGMD i	Barry J. Lewis (gol.), <i>Gwaith Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd, i, Canu i deulu Penmynydd</i> (Aberystwyth, 2003)
GGMD ii	Barry J. Lewis (gol.), <i>Gwaith Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd, ii, Canu Crefyddol</i> (Aberystwyth, 2005)
GGMD iii	Ann Parry Owen (gol.), <i>Gwaith Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd, iii, Canu Amrywiol</i> (Aberystwyth, 2007)

GGrG	Rhiannon Ifans, Ann Parry Owen, W. Dyfed Rowlands ac Erwain H. Rheinallt (goln.), <i>Gwaith Gronw Gyriog, Iorwerth ab y Cyriog, Mab Clochyddyn, Gruffudd ap Tudur Goch ac Ithel Ddu</i> (Aberystwyth, 1997)
GG.net	'Guto'r Glyn.net' <www.gutorglyn.net>
GHC	Islwyn Jones (gol.), <i>Gwaith Hywel Cilan</i> (Caerdydd, 1963)
GHCEM	Huw Ceiriog Jones (gol.), <i>Gwaith Huw Ceiriog ac Edward Maelor</i> (Caerdydd, 1990)
GHD	A. Cynfael Lake (gol.), <i>Gwaith Huw ap Dafydd ap Llywelyn ap Madog</i> (Aberystwyth, 1995)
GHS	Dylan Foster Evans (gol.), <i>Gwaith Hywel Swrdwal a'i deulu</i> (Aberystwyth, 2000)
GIBH	<i>Gwaith Ieuan Brydydd Hir</i> (gol.), M. Paul Bryant-Quinn (Aberystwyth, 2000)
GIF	Howell L. Jones ac E.I. Rowlands (gol.), <i>Gwaith Iorwerth Fynglwyd</i> (Caerdydd, 1975)
GIG	D.R. Johnston (gol.), <i>Gwaith Iolo Goch</i> (Caerdydd, 1988)
GILIF	M. Paul Bryant-Quinn (gol.), <i>Gwaith Ieuan ap Llywelyn Fychan, Ieuan Llwyd Brydydd a Lewys Aled</i> (Aberystwyth, 2003)
GIRh	R. Iestyn Daniel (gol.), <i>Gwaith Ieuan ap Rhydderch</i> (Aberystwyth, 2003)
GLD	A. Cynfael Lake (gol.), <i>Gwaith Lewys Daron</i> (Caerdydd, 1994)
GLGC	Dafydd Johnston (gol.), <i>Gwaith Lewys Glyn Cothi</i> (Caerdydd, 1995)
GLM	Eurys I. Rowlands, <i>Gwaith Lewys Môn</i> (Caerdydd, 1975)
GLMorg	A. Cynfael Lake (gol.), <i>Gwaith Lewys Morgannwg</i> (dwy gyfrol, Aberystwyth, 2004)
GLl	R. Iestyn Daniel (gol.), <i>Gwaith Llawdden</i> (Aberystwyth, 2006)

GLIBH	Ann Parry Owen a Dylan Foster Evans (gol.), <i>Gwaith Llywelyn Brydydd Hoddnant, Dafydd ap Gwilym, Hillyn ac eraill</i> (Aberystwyth, 1996)
GLIF	Kathleen Anne Bramley et al. (gol.), <i>Gwaith Llywelyn Fardd I ac Eraill o Feirdd y Ddeuddegfed Ganrif</i> (Caerdydd, 1994)
GLIG	Dafydd Johnston (gol.), <i>Gwaith Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen</i> (Aberystwyth, 1998)
GLIGt	R. Iestyn Daniel (gol.), <i>Gwaith Llywelyn ap Gutun</i> (Aberystwyth, 2007)
GLILl	Elin M. Jones (gol.), <i>Gwaith Llywarch ap Llywelyn 'Prydydd y Moch'</i> (Caerdydd, 1989)
GMB	J.E. Caerwyn Williams et al. (gol.), <i>Gwaith Meilyr Brydydd a'i Ddisgynyddion</i> (Caerdydd, 1994)
GMBen	
GMBr	A. Cynfael Lake (gol.), <i>Gwaith Mathau Brwmffild</i> (Aberystwyth, 2002)
GMD	Huw Meirion Edwards (gol.), <i>Gwaith Madog Dwygraig</i> (Aberystwyth, 2006)
GMRh	Enid Roberts (gol.), <i>Gwaith Maredudd ap Rhys a'i Gyfoedion</i> (Aberystwyth, 2003)
GO	E. Bachellery (éd.), <i>L'oeuvre poétique de Gutun Owain</i> (Paris, 1950–1)
GOLIM	Eurys Rolant (gol.), <i>Gwaith Owain ap Llywelyn ab y Moel</i> (Caerdydd, 1984)
GPB	Huw Meirion Edwards (gol.), <i>Gwaith Prydydd Breuan, Rhys ap Dafydd ab Einion, Hywel Ystorm, a cherddi dychan dienw o Lyfr Coch Hergest</i> (Aberystwyth, 2000)
GPC	<i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> (Caerdydd, 1950–)
GPC ²	<i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> (ail arg., Caerdydd, 2003–)
GPhE	M. Paul Bryant-Quinn (gol.), <i>Gwaith Syr Phylib Emlyn, Syr Lewys Meudwy a Mastr Harri ap Hywel</i> (Aberystwyth, 2001)
GRhB	Eurys I. Rowlands (gol.), <i>Gwaith Rhys Brydydd a Rhisiart ap Rhys</i> (Caerdydd, 1976)

GRhGE	Dylan Foster Evans (gol.), <i>Gwaith Rhys Goch Eryri</i> (Aberystwyth, 2007)
GSC	A. Cynfael Lake (gol.), <i>Gwaith Siôn Ceri</i> (Aberystwyth, 1996)
GSCyf	R. Iestyn Daniel (gol.), <i>Gwaith Dafydd Bach ap Madog Wladaidd 'Sypyn Cyfeiliog' a Llywelyn ab y Moel</i> (Aberystwyth, 1998)
GSDT	Rhiannon Ifans (gol.), <i>Gwaith Syr Dafydd Trefor</i> (Aberystwyth, 2005)
GSH	A. Cynfael Lake (gol.), <i>Gwaith Siôn ap Hywel</i> (Aberystwyth, 1999)
GSRh	Nerys Ann Jones ac Erwain Haf Rheinallt (gol.), <i>Gwaith Sefnyn, Rhisierdyn, Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed a Llywarch Bentwrch</i> (Aberystwyth, 1995)
GST	Enid Roberts (gol.), <i>Gwaith Siôn Tudur</i> (2 gyf., Caerdydd, 1980)
GTP	Thomas Roberts (gol.), <i>Gwaith Tudur Penllyn ac Ieuan ap Tudur Penllyn</i> , gol. (Caerdydd, 1958)
GWL ii	A.O.H. Jarman and G.R. Hughes (ed.), <i>A Guide to Welsh Literature, A Guide to Welsh Literature: Volume 2</i> (Llandybie, 1984)
Gwyn	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad J. Gwynedd Davies, yn Llyfrgell Prifysgol Cymru, Bangor
GyB	Dafydd Johnston (gol.), <i>Galar y Beirdd: Marwnadau Plant / Poets' Grief: Medieval Welsh Elegies for Children</i> (Caerdydd, 1993)
HCLl	Leslie Harries (gol.), <i>Gwaith Huw Cae Llwyd ac Eraill</i> (Caerdydd, 1953)
HPE	<i>Historia Peredur vab Efwrawc</i> , gol. Glenys Witherich Goetinck (Caerdydd, 1976)
HPF	J.Y.W. Lloyd, <i>The History of Powys Fadog</i> (6 vols., London, 1881–7)
ID	Ifor Williams (gol.), <i>Casgliad o Waith Ieuan Deulwyn</i> (Bangor, 1909)
IGE	Henry Lewis, Thomas Roberts ac Ifor Williams (gol.), <i>Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill</i> (Bangor, 1925)

IGE ²	Henry Lewis, Thomas Roberts ac Ifor Williams (gol.), <i>Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill</i> (ail arg., Caerdydd, 1937)
IGP	Dafydd Johnston (ed.), <i>Iolo Goch: Poems</i> (Llandysul, 1993)
JMHRS	<i>Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society</i> , 1949–
LIGC	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth / A manuscript in the collection of the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
Llst	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Llanstephan, yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth / A manuscript in the Llanstephan collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
MCF	‘Y Mynegai i Farddoniaeth Gymraeg y Llawysgrifau’ / ‘The Index to Welsh Poetry in Manuscript’ < http://maldwyn.llgc.org.uk >
Mont Coll	<i>Collections Historical and Archaeological ... by the Powysland Club</i> , 1868–
Mos	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Mostyn, yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth / A manuscript in the Mostyn collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
NLWJ	<i>National Library of Wales Journal</i> , 1939–
OBWV	Thomas Parry (ed.), <i>The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse</i> (Oxford, 1976)
OCD ³	Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (eds.), <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> (third ed., Oxford, 1996)
ODCC ³	F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone (eds.), <i>The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church</i> (third ed., Oxford, 1967, revised 2005)
OED ²	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i> (second ed., Oxford, 1989)
OED Online	‘The Oxford English Dictionary’ < http://www.oed.com >

Pen	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Peniarth, yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth / A manuscript in the Peniarth collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
PKM	Ifor Williams (gol.), <i>Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi</i> (Caerdydd, 1930)
Psalm	'The Psalms' in the Old Testament
RB	John Rhys and J. Gwenogvryn Evans (eds.), <i>The Text of the Bruts from the Red Book of Hergest</i> (Oxford, 1890)
RCAHM (Anglesey)	<i>An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire: Anglesey</i> (London, 1937)
RCAHM (Caernarvonshire)	<i>An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire: Caernarvonshire</i> (3 vols., London, 1956, 1960, 1964)
RCAHM (Flint)	<i>An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire, Vol II: County of Flint</i> (London, 1912)
RCAHM (Merionethshire)	<i>An Inventory of Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire: Merionethshire</i> (London, 1921)
RepWM	Daniel Huws, <i>Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts</i> (i'w gyhoeddi)
RWM	<i>Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language</i> , ed. J. Gwenogvryn Evans (London, 1898–1910)
SC	<i>Studia Celtica</i> , 1966–
SoldierLME	'The Soldier in later Medieval England' < www.medievalsoldier.org >
Stowe	Llawysgrif o gasgliad Stowe yn y Llyfrgell Brydeinig
TA	T. Gwynn Jones (gol.), <i>Gwaith Tudur Aled</i> (Caerdydd, 1926)
TC	T.J. Morgan, <i>Y Treigladau a'u Cystrawen</i> (Caerdydd, 1952)
TCHS	<i>Transactions of the Caernarvonshire Historical Society</i> , 1939–
TCHSDd	<i>Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Sir Ddinbych</i> , 1952–

TCHSG	<i>Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Sir Gaernarfon</i> , 1939–
TDHS	<i>Transactions of the Denbighshire Historical Society</i> , 1952–
THSC	<i>The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion</i> , 1892/3–
TLIM	G.J. Williams, <i>Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg</i> (Caerdydd, 1948)
TNA	‘The National Archives’ < www.nationalarchives.gov.uk >
TRS	<i>The Radnorshire Society Transactions</i> , 1931–
TYP ³	Rachel Bromwich (ed.), <i>Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Triads of the Island of Britain</i> (third ed., Cardiff, 2006)
YEPWC	<i>Ymryson Edmwnd Prys a Wiliam Cynwal</i> , gol. Gruffydd Aled Williams (Caerdydd, 1986)
WATU	Melville Richards, <i>Welsh Administrative and Territorial Units</i> (Cardiff, 1969)
WB Online	‘Welsh Biography Online’ < http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/index.html >
WCD	P.C. Bartrum, <i>A Welsh Classical Dictionary: People in History and Legend up to about A.D. 1000</i> (Aberystwyth, 1993)
WG1	P.C. Bartrum, <i>Welsh Genealogies AD 300–1400</i> (Cardiff, 1974)
WG2	P.C. Bartrum, <i>Welsh Genealogies AD 1400–1500</i> (Aberystwyth, 1983)
WHR	<i>The Welsh History Review</i> , 1960–
Wy	Llawysgrif yng nghasgliad Wynnstey, yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth / A manuscript in the Wynnstey collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
YB	J.E. Caerwyn Williams (gol.), <i>Ysgrifau Beirniadol</i> (Dinbych, 1965–)

Cyffredinol / General

arg.	argraffiad	mm.	<i>membranes</i>
c.	<i>circa</i>	o.c.	o oed Crist
c.c.	cyn Crist	r	<i>recto</i>
cf.	cymharer	s.n.	<i>sub nomine</i>
ed.	<i>editor, edition</i>	s.v.	<i>sub verbum</i>
eds.	<i>editors</i>	td.	tudalen
gol.	golygydd	v	<i>verso</i>
goln.	golygyddion	vol.	<i>volume</i>
idem	<i>idem</i>	vols.	<i>volume</i>
m.	<i>membrane</i>		

‘Arms of stone upon my grave’:
Weapons in the Poetry of Guto’r Glyn

JENNY DAY

Warfare was a major theme in medieval Welsh poetry, its prominence reflecting the frequently grim realities of medieval life as well as the particular preoccupations of the ruling classes. Throughout the Middle Ages courage and prowess in battle were regarded not only as virtues for their own sake but also as essential qualifications for Welsh rulers, who were expected to be able to defend the people and territories under their sway. Following the defeat of the last independent Welsh princes in 1282/3 the *uchelwyr*, often themselves of princely descent, who took their place as the poets’ patrons, would continue to be praised as warriors. Poetic imagery belonging to an earlier age would be adapted and extended to fit the demands of a new era, one characterized not only by developments in military equipment such as improvements to plate armour and the introduction of gunpowder artillery but also by the changed status and outlook of the patrons. Although the struggles of both Owain Lawgoch and Owain Glyndŵr against English rule were praised and supported by poets, it is the Welshmen who fought on the side of the English in the Hundred Years War and took part in the later Wars of the Roses who feature most prominently in the body of poetry that has survived to this day.¹ The poets,

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¹ D. Johnston, *Llên yr Uchelwyr: Hanes Beirniadol Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg 1300–1525* (Caerdydd, 2005), 6–8; G.A. Williams, ‘More than “skimble-skamble stuff”: The Medieval Welsh Poetry Associated with Owain Glyndŵr’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 181 (2012), 1–33.

for the most part, seem to have found the loyalty of these men to English kings or magnates perfectly compatible with their role as leaders of Welsh society and patrons of poetry, and indeed the concept of knighthood, in particular, was eagerly embraced as an example of the high status that might be won by such means.²

Guto'r Glyn certainly seems to have held similar views, judging by his enthusiastic praise of patrons including Welsh commanders who fought in France in the last, defensive phase of the Hundred Years War as well as important figures involved in the later Wars of the Roses. Furthermore, in his case the praise of these men as warriors in the English cause may be regarded as something beyond the merely pragmatic and stereotypical, because Guto himself had first-hand experience of the war in France. His name (*Gitto Glyn*) is listed amongst the archers in a muster roll for the expedition to Normandy in 1441 under the command of Duke Richard of York,³ and evidence from within his poems suggests that he may also have taken part in an earlier expedition to Normandy in 1436, perhaps returning to Wales early in 1437.⁴ We do not know whether his military career continued after the Normandy expedition(s).⁵

The shared experiences of campaigning in a foreign land are likely to have strengthened the bond between Guto and his early patrons. His poems to the Welsh commanders Matthew Gough and Sir Richard Gethin, dating from the period of his military service, suggest feelings of comradeship and even friendship as well as admiration for their military capabilities. Guto calls Matthew Gough ‘My friend in our hour of need in Rouen’ and vividly describes his own transformation from grief to defiant joy when the rumours that Sir Richard Gethin has been taken prisoner turn out to be false.⁶ In another, particularly memorable poem Guto responds to the news that Thomas ap Watkin has enlisted to fight in France by inviting him to join ‘battle’ against the wine of Gwent, representing the French army and

² The complex attitudes of the poets towards England, the English Crown and the English people are discussed by B.J. Lewis, ‘Late Medieval Welsh Praise Poetry and Nationality: The Military Career of Guto'r Glyn Revisited’, SC XLV (2011), 111–30. See also A. Chapman, ‘The King’s Welshmen: Welsh Involvement in the Expeditionary Army of 1415’, *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 9 (2011), 41–64, for discussion of the interesting lack of references by fifteenth-century poets to Welsh involvement at the battle of Agincourt 1415, perhaps relating in part to lingering sensitivities over Owain Glyndŵr’s revolt.

³ Guto’s name, in muster roll TNA E101/53/33, m. 2, col. 1, line 35, was discovered by Eurig Salisbury, and the relevant section of the roll is reproduced in E. Salisbury, *Ar Drywydd Guto'r Glyn ap Siancyn y Glyn* (Aberystwyth, 2007) (frontispiece).

⁴ Salisbury, *Ar Drywydd Guto'r Glyn*, 14–15; Lewis, ‘Late Medieval Welsh Praise Poetry and Nationality’, 113–18.

⁵ For contrasting views, see S. Lewis, ‘Gyrfa Filwrol Guto'r Glyn’, YB IX (1976), 94; Lewis, ‘Late Medieval Welsh Praise Poetry and Nationality’, 113–18; A. Chapman, 31 above.

⁶ GG.net 3.23 *F'enaid wrth ein rhaid yn Rhôn*; *ibid.* poem 2.

its commanders.⁷ One Welsh commander with whom Guto seems to have been particularly well acquainted was Henry Griffith of Newcourt; Guto addressed five poems to him at different stages of their lives, one of which mentions that it was Henry who recruited him into the duke of York's army.⁸ While it is true that mention of both 'personal feelings' and of the sharing of wine or mead between poets and patrons was a time-honoured poetic convention, it is worth noting that a 'golden' cloak given to Guto by Sir Richard Gethin was so splendid that it inspired a poem by Ieuan ap Hywel Swrdwal.⁹

Guto'r Glyn's experience of, and interest in, warfare often found expression in references to weapons of various kinds, not only in the poems dating from the time of his military service but also in those sung for a variety of patrons and in a variety of genres throughout his career. Given the long-standing prominence of weapons in Welsh medieval poetry in general, however, it is important to take into account the influence of the bardic tradition on the imagery of Guto's poems and those of his contemporaries. This tradition manifested itself in well-worn epithets such as *eurgledd* '[with] golden sword' or *gwaywrudd* '[with] a red / bloody spear', both of which were also used by poets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and in a more general way in the stereotypical imagery of the warrior whose sharp, steely, bright, bloodstained or broken weapons symbolized the ferocity of his attack and (in the latter case) his steadfast refusal to retreat.¹⁰ Various weapons were also used figuratively to represent patrons, thereby praising their military prowess or, in a more general sense, their protective or 'forceful' role in society. Indeed, so freely are words for weapons used in praise poetry and elegies that it is often difficult to determine whether any given example is a figurative reference to the patron himself, a metonym whereby a weapon is used to represent the entire 'unit' of the warrior and his armaments, or a direct reference to a weapon in his possession which might itself be either real or stereotypical. A line such as *Gwayw 'm mrwydr i Gymru ydoedd* 'he was a spear in battle for Wales', for example, represents an unambiguously figurative reference, and *A chadw Mawnt â chadwayw mawr* 'and hold Mantes with a mighty battle-spear' is a reference to an actual or symbolic weapon (perhaps representing various spears that the subject, Sir Richard Gethin, would have used in battle), but the precise nature and significance of the sword in *D'arglwydd dad, diwyrogledd dur* 'Your father the lord, unswerving sword of steel' is much

⁷ Ibid. poem 4.

⁸ Ibid. poems 32–6; see A. Chapman, 8 above.

⁹ GHS poem 24; see also Salisbury, *Ar Drywydd Guto'r Glyn*, 29–30; Lewis, 'Late Medieval Welsh Praise Poetry and Nationality', 116–17.

¹⁰ For weapons in the earlier poetry, see J.P. Day, 'Arfau yn yr Hengerdd a cherddi Beirdd y Tywysogion' (Ph.D. Cymru [Aberystwyth], 2010), available online at 'Cadair: Aberystwyth University Open Access Repository' <hdl.handle.net/2160/4646>.

harder to pin down, and perhaps it is better not to try to do so.¹¹

The usual heroic imagery is turned on its head in Guto's satire of his fellow poet Dafydd ab Edmwnd which has in its second line the mocking question *ai sawdiwr wyd?* 'are you a soldier?'¹² The (probably figurative) reference to a 'golden sword of glory' (*aur gleddy'r glod*) is no doubt meant sarcastically and so too the description of the breaking of Dafydd's *pais* 'cuirass' because of his refusal to retreat.¹³ The poem goes on to offer a disparaging inventory of Dafydd's armaments including a shield made of wax ([*t*]arian *wêr*) and a salt cellar for a helmet (*A'th helm ydyw'r crwth halen*).¹⁴ We cannot be certain as to what provoked this satire – possibly Guto considered that Dafydd was too small in stature and too feeble to be a proper soldier, particularly in comparison with himself, or it may be that Dafydd's boasting of his own prowess provoked this response from his fellow poet.¹⁵

Satirical and debate poems of this period might also use words for weapons figuratively to describe facial features or parts of the body, generally in a disparaging context. *Arf* 'tool, weapon', *paladr* 'shaft, spear' and *pâr* 'spear' are all used as phallic metaphors in another of Guto's satires on Dafydd ab Edmwnd, sung in response to a poem of Dafydd's which satirized him in a similar manner.¹⁶ Guto's weapon metaphors are more often found in other genres, however, and in more respectable contexts. He describes a purse as 'a piece of gold that's a brilliant shield' in a poem of thanks (*Darn o aur yn darian wych*) and his own tongue as a 'red mendacious sword of song' in a light-hearted praise poem (*Cleddau cerdd celwyddawg coch*).¹⁷ Archery imagery is particularly prominent in his poems, most notably the idea of 'shooting' praise at a patron or rewards at a poet, as discussed below. The destructive nature of weaponry is more to the fore,

¹¹ GG.net 36.39, 1.56, 78.9.

¹² Ibid. poem 67.

¹³ Ibid. 67.13–14 *Y mae arwydd mwyeri / A phais don am na ffoist di* 'There's a trace of briers / and a fractured cuirass because you didn't flee.' The word *pais* could denote a tunic or other garments for men and women, as well as armour, see GPC s.v. *pais*¹. Guto may well have been playing upon the different meanings of this word to increase the bite of his satire.

¹⁴ GG.net 67.23 and 26.

¹⁵ See ibid. poems 66 and 67 (background notes).

¹⁶ Ibid. 68.17, 55 and 57. Dafydd's satire alleges that Guto had ruptured himself from throwing heavy stones and uses a variety of similar metaphors including *paladr* and [*g*]wayw 'spear' (ibid. 68a.35 and 80). The *tryfer* used as a metaphor for Ieuan ap Gruffudd Leiaf's eyebrows ibid. 93.5 *Gwybydd, lo trefydd aelïau tryfer – maib* 'Realize, simpleton of the towns with eyebrows like a trident to dig turnips' may also bear some relevance to weapons. The word *tryfer* normally denotes either a spear used in warfare or a fishing trident (GPC s.v. *tryfer*) but by associating it with turnips Guto overturns any possible heroic connotations! Cf. also Llywelyn ap Gutun's description of Guto's 'axe-shaped nose' ([*b*]wyall *drwyn*, GG.net 65a.14) and Dafydd ab Edmwnd's description of him as having *ystum hoc* the 'shape of a billhook' (ibid. 68a.4).

¹⁷ GG.net 58.45, 7.16.

by contrast, in his use of an arrow metaphor for the pain of bereavement, an example of a common poetic topos whereby weapons are used figuratively to describe various types of strong emotion, from grief to the pangs of love.¹⁸ A similar, though less personalized, type of image is Guto's description of the death of one of his patrons, Abbot Rhys ap Dafydd of Strata Florida, as a divinely struck hammer blow.¹⁹

Guto's surviving works contain only one poem on a purely religious theme, a 'Meditation at the end of life' in which his realization of the certainty of his death and the uncertainty of its timing and of his soul's fate thereafter are represented as blows from three swords.²⁰ He also mentions the Holy Lance which pierced Christ's side on the Cross, not only in this poem but also in his 'Supplication to the Rood in Chester on behalf of Dafydd ab Ieuan', where divine intervention is called upon to cure Dafydd's own wound, caused by an arrow.²¹ Other references to weapons in a religious context are the yellow or golden spear (*gwayw melyn*) depicted with St Michael the Archangel as he 'weighs the wickedness and goodness of a woman' in Guto's elegy for Gweurful daughter of Madog of Abertanad,²² and the symbolic use of a [g]laif 'spear', or possibly 'sword', to combat sin in his praise of the new house of Sir Siôn Mechain, parson of Llandrinio.²³

¹⁸ Ibid. 54.1 *Marw Dafydd y sydd fal saeth – i'm esgryn* 'Dafydd's death is like an arrow to my bones'; cf. ibid. 105.37 *Taradr oedd ddymod hiraeth* 'The strike of grief was like that of an auger'; also GHS 16.3–4 *Medrwyd yn wir o'i hiraeth, / Morus wych, 'y mwrw â saeth* 'Truly was I struck with an arrow because of grief for him, / splendid Morus'; DG.net 17.1–3 *Henaint anghywraint a hiraeth – a phoen / A phenyd fal blaen saeth, / Marw lfor ...* 'Awkward old age and longing and pain / and tribulation like an arrow head, / lfor is dead ...'; ibid. poem 127 ('Love's Spear').

¹⁹ GG.net 9.23–4 *Dymod a roddes Iesu / Â gordd fawr ar y gerdd fu* 'It was a blow against song / struck by Jesus with a great hammer.' Cf. ibid. 36.2 *Dwrn Duw a roes dymod ynn* 'the fist of God dealt us a blow'; ibid. 47.7 *Trewis Duw dymod trist iawn* 'God struck a very sad blow with his fist'; GLCG 179.41–2 *Iesu â'i fwyall noswaith / a dorres un da o'r saith* 'Jesus with his axe one night / struck down a good man from amongst the seven'; GDEp 20.23 *Llaw Dduw a'i lladdodd â'i ddart* 'it was the hand of God that slew him with his spear'.

²⁰ GG.net 118.43–50 *Tri chledd i'm taro â chlwyf, / Trwm ddolur tra meddylwyf; / Troes Duw Dad (tristyd a wn) / Tri meddwl trwm a wyddwn: / Marw fyddaf i'm arfeddyd, / Ni wn ba awr yn y byd; / Ac ni wn (a gynanaf / Eb oludd yw) i ble 'dd af* 'There are three blades which strike me with their wound, / great pain as I meditate; / God the Father has presented me (I am acquainted with sadness) / with three heavy thoughts which I should know: / that I will die, that is my destiny, / I know not at all at what hour; / and I know not (what I say / is without hindrance) where I will go.'

²¹ Ibid. 69.7–8 *Aeth dall â gwayw i'th dyllu, / I'r gwaed ir â'r gwayw du* 'A blind man took his spear to pierce you / into the fresh blood with the bitter pain'; ibid. 118.35–6 *Duw a roes draw drwy'i ais drom / Ar wayw dur Ei waed erom* 'God gave yonder, through His side which causes sorrow, / His blood for us on a steel lance'.

²² Ibid. 88.45–6 *Mihangel â'r gwayw melyn / A bwysa drwg a da dyn*; see ibid.n.

²³ Ibid. 85.39–42 *A'i law yntau fal Antwn / A'i laif rhudd (ei lyfr yw hwn) / I ladd y Saith, lewaidd Siôn, / Marwol Bechodau mawrion* 'And his hand like that of St Antony / with his red spear [/?sword] (this is his book) / to kill, mighty Siôn, / the Seven great Deadly Sins.' Pigs and bells,

Lastly, weapons have a prominent place in a major genre which, having developed in the fourteenth century from earlier roots, was becoming particularly important in Guto’s time, namely the poems composed to request specific items or to offer thanks for them.²⁴ A prominent feature of such poems is *dyfalu*, a poetic style which uses a rich variety of different metaphors and similes, thereby providing a degree of descriptive detail that is not normally found in the other genres. Such passages can provide substantial insights into late medieval material culture, particularly when interpreted in the light of evidence from contemporary illustrations and surviving artefacts, as Ifor Edwards and Claude Blair demonstrated in their study of Welsh bucklers (a type of small round shield).²⁵ Guto’s Glyn composed several poems in this genre, including one to offer thanks for a buckler and another to request a hunting knife on behalf of one of his patrons.²⁶

Spears

The type of weapon most often mentioned by Guto, by a considerable margin, is the spear or lance, with approximately 60 references.²⁷ Guto uses a variety of different terms, the commonest by far being *gwayw*, whilst *dart*, *paladr* and *pâr* each occur three times and *lownsgae* and *rhôn* are represented only by single examples.²⁸ The word *gwayw* is used to form several compound nouns and adjectives including *cadwayw* ‘battle-spear’ and *gwaywrudd* ‘(with) red spear’.²⁹ As well as these specific words for a

rather than any kind of weapon, were traditionally associated with St Antony of Egypt (D.H. Farmer, *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (Oxford, 1978), 19–20), but in any case the weapon in Guto’s poem is clearly a symbolic one intended to convey the idea that Sir Siôn battles against sin in the same way that St Antony struggled against temptation in the desert. For an example of a more extensive metaphorical arming against sin including a sword, bow and arrows and armour (*llurig*), see GLGC 200.31–44. Such military imagery, often involving armour, derives ultimately from the Bible, for example Ephesians 6.17 ‘And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God’, and is also found in earlier Welsh poetry, see M. Haycock (ed.), *Blodeugerdd Barddas o Ganu Crefyddol Cymrar* (Abertawe, 1994), 25; Day, ‘Arfau’, 412–13.

²⁴ B.O. Huws, *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch c.1350–c.1630* (Caerdydd, 1998).

²⁵ I. Edwards and C. Blair, ‘Welsh Bucklers’, *Antiquaries Journal*, 62 (1982), 74–115.

²⁶ GG.net poems 110 and 76.

²⁷ Medieval Welsh terminology, as we understand it, does not allow any reliable distinction to be made between cavalry lances and other types of spear, so I have tended to use the general term ‘spear’ for both except when discussing the specific ‘couched lance’ technique.

²⁸ GG.net 1.29, 23.47, 95.25 *dart* ‘dart, spear’; *ibid.* 3.14, 48.50, 68.55 *paladr* ‘shaft, spear’; *ibid.* 3.9, 48.47, 68.57 *pâr* ‘spear’; *ibid.* 78.54 *lownsgae* ‘lancegay’; *ibid.* 106.39–40 *Ar Ieuan deg a’i rôn dur / Y perthyn campau Arthur* ‘fair Ieuan with his steel spear / is endowed with Arthur’s feats’ (*Rhôn* was sometimes used as a specific name for King Arthur’s spear and this may have influenced Guto’s choice of words here).

²⁹ *Ibid.* 1.56, 10.21, 32.7; see also *ibid.* 10.16 *awchwayw* ‘honed spear’; *ibid.* 75.56 *canwayw* ‘a hundred spears’; *ibid.* 55.3 [g]waywlas ‘blue [bright] his spear’; *ibid.* 55.39 [g]waywlym ‘sharp-

spear such weapons might also be denoted by terms which were used elsewhere for sticks or staves, such as *ffon*,³⁰ *llath*³¹ and, perhaps, *trosol*,³² as well as *iau* which, although its more usual meaning was ‘yoke’, could apparently also denote a spear in the poetry of this period.³³ The word *bêr* more regularly denotes a spear in poetic contexts, although it could also mean ‘spit, skewer’, and either of these interpretations would be possible for the two examples in Guto’s works.³⁴ Two other words open to differing interpretations are *llain* ‘blade, sword, spear’, occurring three times in Guto’s poems,³⁵ and *glaif* ‘spear, sword, ?billhook’, which occurs twice.³⁶ He

speared’; *ibid.* 83.53 [g]waywLyr ‘spear-wielding Llŷr’; *ibid.* 10.8, 51.51 *onwayw* ‘ash spear’.

³⁰ GPC s.v. *ffon* (a) ‘stick, walking-stick, staff, crook; rod; club, cudgel; lance, bar’. The meaning ‘spear’ is likely in GG.net 86.35 *Ei ffon fawr a phen ei farch* ‘his great spear and the head of his horse’ and 51.45–8 *Dall ennyd â’i wayw llinon / Fu Ffwg oedd fwyaf ei ffon, / Ac ar ei farch gorfu wŷr / A bwrw pawb â’r iau pybyr* ‘Fulk was blind for a while with his ash spear / the greatest one with his staff [/spear], / and on his horse he conquered soldiers / and struck [/unhorsed] everyone with his mighty lance’ (the alliteration of *Ffwg* with *ffon* favoured their juxtaposition in poetry, cf. GLCG 84.55 and GO XVII.15). Either ‘spear’ or ‘staff’ is possible for the *ffon* in GG.net 67.5–6 (see 41n below). Other examples of *ffon* are discussed below in the section on knives, staves and axes.

³¹ GPC s.v. *llath* (a) ‘rod, staff, wand, stick ... lath, also transf.; spear, lance, javelin’. A *llath* appears to be some kind of edged weapon or implement in GG.net 62.19–20 *Llwyth Hywel â’r llath haearn / A dorrai’r dorch yn dair darn* ‘Hywel’s tribe with the iron rod [/?spear] / cut his torque in three parts’, which may refer to the division of land between heirs (see *ibid.* 19n). A spear seems a likely interpretation for the *llath hirddu* (*hir* ‘long’ + *du* ‘black’) associated with a patron’s forebears *ibid.* 100.6, whilst the description of a hunting knife as a [l]ath *ibid.* 76.31 may represent either comparison with a spear – i.e. a long, formidable weapon – or a more direct reference to the knife’s length, cf. the meaning ‘measuring rod’ in GPC s.v. *llath* (b) and line 35 of the same poem, *Moes arall i’w mesuraw* ‘give another to measure against the first one’. (For a similar usage of *llath*, as a metaphor for a sword, see GO XVII.28). The references to a golden *llath* in GG.net 41.34 and 71.40 are unlikely to denote weapons.

³² See the section on knives, staves and axes.

³³ See GPC s.v. *iau*¹ ‘yoke; measure of four feet, approximately equal to three modern feet; ?staff or long lance’. In Guto’s poem of thanks for a horse (GG.net 51.45–8, quoted in 30n above), *iau* apparently denotes the spear used by the hero Fulk Fitzwarine to unhorse his enemies (cf. GO X.27n, LV.31). However, he may be playing upon the other, more prosaic meanings of *iau* in his light-hearted reference to his own hypothetical jousting prowess in subsequent lines of the same poem (GG.net 51.49–52, discussed later in this section).

³⁴ GPC² s.v. *bêr*. One of Guto’s examples of *bêr* is applied metaphorically to an arrow (GG.net 69.26) whilst the other is used disparagingly of the armaments of his fellow poet in his satire on Dafydd ab Edmwnd (*ibid.* 67.22).

³⁵ GPC s.v. *llain* (a); GG.net 23.9, 74.3, 83.15. In each case the *llain* is mentioned either figuratively or as a general, praiseworthy attribute, and it impossible to determine what kind of weapon is meant.

³⁶ GG.net 83.15–16 *Gruffudd gloywlain, fuchudd glew, / Fychan, leifdan alafdeu* ‘Gruffudd Fychan of the brilliant spear [/?sword], black and valiant, / with a fiery sword [/?spear] and great wealth’; *ibid.* 85.39–42 (see 23n above). Though ‘spear’ was the usual meaning of *glaif* in earlier medieval Welsh it might sometimes denote a sword, a meaning which was also current for the English equivalent *glaive* by the late fifteenth century. By c.1450 the English *glaive* could denote ‘a weapon consisting of a blade fastened to a long handle; a kind of halbert’, but

may also have used the word *arf* ‘weapon’ to denote (or include) spears on occasion.³⁷ Lastly, his works include several terms for a spear-point or spear-head, namely *blaen gwayw*,³⁸ *osgl gwayw*,³⁹ *pwynt Melan* ‘point of Milanese steel’,⁴⁰ and, perhaps, the *pig* of a *ffon*.⁴¹

Several of Guto’s references to spears include the element *onn* ‘ash (tree(s), wood)’. He twice uses the compound noun *onwayw* (*onn* + *gwayw*), and also refers to a [*p*]âr *onwydd* and [*g*]wayw *llinon*.⁴² Ash wood was particularly suitable for spears and was often used for this purpose, although the common use of terms for an ash spear in heroic contexts in earlier poetry makes it unwise to assume that any one example should be taken literally as denoting a weapon made from this particular type of wood.⁴³ Similar considerations apply to the ‘iron’ (*haearn*), ‘steel’ (*dur*) and ‘golden’ (*aur*) spears in Guto’s poems. The former terms could refer to the metal used for the spear-heads, of course, and gold or yellow paint might have been used to adorn the shafts of some spears, particularly those used in tournaments.⁴⁴ In the poetry, however, figurative meanings of *haearn* and *dur* such as ‘hard’ or even (in the case of *dur*) ‘cruel’ were perhaps more important,⁴⁵ whilst *aur* was often used to refer to the general splendour of equipment or personages.⁴⁶ As well as containing a reference to a [*t*]eg *lownsgae aur* ‘fair and golden lancegay’, for example, Guto’s poem in praise of John Talbot, second earl of Shrewsbury, also refers to the earl himself as a *marchog aur* ‘golden knight’.⁴⁷ By contrast, Guto’s reference in another

the similar meanings ‘sickle, billhook, scythe’ are not attested for the Welsh *glaif* until the sixteenth century. See OED Online s.v. *glaive*, *n.*, 1.a, 2.a and 3; GPC s.v. *glaif* (a) and (b).

³⁷ Other words for generic weaponry used by Guto are *dur* ‘steel [weapon]’ (GG.net 3.29 and 35.30), *haearnyn* ‘iron [weapon]’ (69.19) and perhaps *trec* ‘tools ...; arms’ (23.24); GPC s.vv.

³⁸ GG.net 83.39; GPC s.v. *blaen* 1(a) ‘end, point, tip, apex, summit’.

³⁹ GG.net 83.26; GPC s.v. *osgl* ‘branch, bough, twig; tine or branch of antlers’.

⁴⁰ GG.net 1.27; GPC s.v. *pwynt*¹ (f) ‘point (of pin, knife, pencil, &c.), tip, sting’. Though the word *pwynt* is not closely associated with a word for a spear in Guto’s poem, the wider context suggests that a spear-point is meant (see the discussion of jousting later in this section, where the relevant passage is quoted, and for *Melan* see below, 78n).

⁴¹ GPC s.v. *pig*¹ 1(a) ‘pointed or tapering end, prickle, (sharp) point, spike, any pointed or tapering object, e.g. pike, lance’. Guto may be playing upon the different meanings of *ffon*, ‘staff’ and ‘spear’, in his satire on Dafydd ab Edmwnd, GG.net 67.5–6 *Torraist (cedwid Duw wirion!) / Y cerrig â phig dy ffon* ‘you split stones (may God preserve a good man!) / with the tip of your spear’; cf. also the meanings ‘pitchfork; quarterstaff’ given for *ffon ddwybig* in GPC s.v. *ffon*.

⁴² GG.net 10.8, 51.51, 48.47, 51.45; GPC s.vv. *onn* (a) ‘ash (tree(s), wood)’ and (b) ‘spears (made of ash)’, *onwydd* (*onn* + *gwŷdd*¹), *gwŷdd*¹ 1(d) ‘spears’ and *llinon* ‘spear(s); ash-tree; ashen’.

⁴³ Day, ‘Arfau’, 63–4, 213, 230.

⁴⁴ Examples of sixteenth-century painted tilting lances are on display at the Royal Armouries, Leeds (Tournament Gallery, object numbers VII.551 and 634).

⁴⁵ GPC s.vv. *dur* and *haearn* 1; GG.net 62.19–20, 95.25, 106.39, 118.36.

⁴⁶ GPC² s.v. *aur*.

⁴⁷ GG.net 78.54 and 29.

poem to the *gwayw melyn* ‘yellow spear’ of St Michael (*Mihangel*) probably really was intended to suggest a ‘golden’ weapon.⁴⁸

The adjective *glas* is open to a range of interpretations. While it might denote a blue colouring or the greyness of metal, it could also convey the brightness of spear-heads or the paleness of their shafts (ash wood, for example, was prized for its pale colour), and indeed *gloyw* ‘bright’ was also used in this context.⁴⁹ Brightness would also be a feature of those weapons associated by Guto with fire. He uses the word *eirias* ‘fiery’ to describe an *awchwayw* ‘honed spear’, whilst *tân* ‘fire’ occurs as an element in the compounds *[g]leifdan* ‘fiery sword [/?spear]’ and *tanrhudd* ‘fire-red’ (describing a *gwayw*).⁵⁰ In such cases there is an added suggestion of the speed of movement of the weapon in the hands of its skilled wielder and, perhaps, the striking of sparks from enemy weapons or armour.⁵¹ The red colour of various types of weaponry is a common feature in medieval Welsh poetry and may normally be assumed to denote bloodstains.⁵² As well as *tanrhudd*, *rhudd* occurs in the compound *gwaywrhudd* and by itself, describing a *glaiif*.⁵³ Guto also used another word for ‘red’, namely *coch* (describing a *pâr*), and even the element *du* in *hirddu*, ‘long and black’, describing a *llath*, may denote staining with blood, although a more literal reference to a dark-coloured spear, or even a figurative one to a ‘bitter’ spear, i.e. one causing pain in battle, are further possibilities.⁵⁴

There are several other examples of long (*hir*) spears in Guto’s works.⁵⁵ He also mentions a ‘mighty [large] battle-spear’ (*[c]adwayw mawr*), whilst a range of meanings including ‘vigorous’, ‘mighty’ or ‘bright’ is possible for the adjective *pybyr*, which describes a *iau*.⁵⁶ Long, large or mighty spears all imply physical strength on the part of the wielder as well as a weapon which is impressive in itself. Indeed, the ‘five long spears’ (*pum wayw hirion*) in Guto’s praise poem for the sons of Llywelyn ap Hwlcyn of Anglesey may be

⁴⁸ Ibid. 88.45–6; GPC s.v. *melyn* (a) ‘yellow, golden’. Cf. Ieuan ap Hywel Swrdwal’s use of the word *melyn* when comparing Guto’s golden cloak to St Michael’s (GHS 24.53–4). The juxtaposition between *melyn* and *Mihangel* would have been favoured by poets for reasons of rhyme (internal in the case of *melyn*) and alliteration, but a *gwayw melyn* is also mentioned, in a secular context, in GLGC 84.53–4 and IGE² 109 (l. 27). See also Day, ‘Arfau’, 233–4.

⁴⁹ GPC s.vv. *glas* 1 ‘blue’, 3(c) ‘greyish-white, steel-coloured, iron grey’ and 6 ‘bright, refulgent’, and *gloyw* ‘bright, shining’; see GG.net 1.29 *Glew oedd ef a gloyw ei ddart* ‘He was bold and his dart was bright’; ibid. 12.4 *A Llywelyn wayw lliwlas* ‘and Llywelyn with the blue-coloured spear’; ibid. 55.3 *Wiliam ap Gruffudd waywlas* ‘Wiliam ap Gruffudd blue [bright] his spear’; ibid. 83.15 (see 36n above).

⁵⁰ GG.net 10.16, 83.16, 33.36.

⁵¹ Day, ‘Arfau’, 291.

⁵² Ibid. 235–6, 298–301, 408.

⁵³ GG.net 10.21, 32.7, 85.40.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 3.9, 100.6; GPC s.v. *du*; Day, ‘Arfau’, 236.

⁵⁵ The singular form *hir* is in GG.net 10.8 and 51.50, and the plural *hirion* in 33.21 and 63.63.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 1.56, 51.48.

a figurative reference to the patrons themselves, suggesting noteworthy height.⁵⁷ Even the mention of a *gwayw uniawn* wielded by Sir Richard Gethin in another poem may imply praiseworthy qualities in Sir Richard himself, since *uniawn* could mean ‘righteous’ and ‘just’ as well as ‘straight’, ‘unswerving’ and ‘upright’.⁵⁸

The sharpness of a spear might be conveyed in a variety of ways. Guto refers to an *awchwayw* ‘honed spear’, perhaps intended figuratively to denote his patron, Hywel ap Llywelyn Fychan of Glyn Aeron, and in another poem calls Wiliam ap Gruffudd of Cochwillan [*g*]waywlym *ŵr* ‘sharp-speared man’.⁵⁹ The phrase *gwayw llif archoll* ‘spear which causes a gushing wound’ likewise conveys the weapon’s sharpness, as well as its more general effectiveness in the hands of its wielder, William Herbert of Raglan, first earl of Pembroke, and, perhaps, his own fierce nature.⁶⁰ Both sharpness and a ‘notched’ or damaged edge are denoted by the compound adjective *awchdwn* (*awch* ‘edge, point; sharpness’ + *twyn* ‘broken’) which describes a *gwayw* in Guto’s poem for Wiliam ap Gruffudd.⁶¹ Such notching, a visible mark of the many blows struck or parried by a weapon, was also used by earlier poets as a symbol of the owner’s prowess and endurance in battle (more often in relation to swords rather than spears).⁶²

Guto’s description of Siancyn Havard of Brecon as one ‘whose nature is to set a spear in motion’ ([*g*]wayw *ennyn annwyd*) likewise suggests prowess in battle, as well as the kind of eagerness memorably expressed centuries earlier in lines from ‘Y Gododdin’: ‘With his shield on his shoulder, he would take hold of the spear as if it were bright wine from glass vessels.’⁶³ It is a more responsible role, by contrast, that is ascribed to the spear in Guto’s poem in praise of Sir Walter Herbert, *Dy wayw sy’n cloi hyd Sain Clêr* ‘Your spear protects as far as St Clears’.⁶⁴ Here it seems that the spear is to be used to maintain law and order and to punish wrongdoers such as the ‘outlaws’ and ‘oppressors’ mentioned in the previous lines of the poem, whilst the mention of the lordship of St Clears serves to express the extent of Sir Walter’s powers in this regard – what we might term ‘the long spear

⁵⁷ Ibid. 63.63. Lewys Glyn Cothi refers several times to tall men and long spears in a poem to Jasper Tudor: GLGC 11.90 *gwayw trahir* ‘very long spear’, 91 *hirion filwyr* ‘tall soldiers’, 98 *gwialir* ‘[the man with the] long spear’ (see *ibid.*n), and 102 *Siasbar hir* ‘tall Jasper’.

⁵⁸ GG.net 1.23; GPC s.v. *union*, *uniawn* (a) and (c).

⁵⁹ GG.net 10.16, 55.39.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 23.35.

⁶¹ Ibid. 55.27. Guto’s is the only example cited in GPC² s.v. *awchdwn* ‘having a broken or notched edge’. See also *ibid.* s.v. *awch*; GPC s.v. *twyn*.

⁶² Day, ‘Arfau’, 256–63, 316–17; and see below for the more common topos of broken or shattered spear-shafts.

⁶³ GG.net 31.1; CA (LXV) 796–7 *ae ysgwyd ar y ysgwyd. hut arolli / wayw mal gwin gloew o wydyr lestri*. The translation is from J.T. Koch (ed.), *The Gododdin of Aneirin: Text and Context from Dark-Age North Britain* (Cardiff, 1997), 111.

⁶⁴ GG.net 27.35.

of the law’!⁶⁵

Less clear is the significance of the [g]wayw *newydd* ‘new spear’ in Guto’s poem to request a brigandine (a kind of light body armour) from Sieffrai Cyffin of Oswestry on behalf of Dafydd Llwyd ap Gruffudd of Abertanad.⁶⁶ It is probably a figurative reference to Dafydd himself as a vigorous young defender, although the idea that his weaponry is of good quality and of the most up-to-date type may also be suggested, and would be particularly apt for the context of this poem. The suggestion might be, therefore, not only that Dafydd is fit and able to make good use of the armour he is requesting, but also that the brigandine would not be out of place amongst his other high-quality equipment. Both aspects are relevant to Eurig Salisbury’s suggestion that the brigandine is equated in the poem with Sieffrai’s own military and defensive role in Powys, which Dafydd, his nephew, is now ready to continue.⁶⁷

In contrast to this ‘new spear’, Guto refers several times to damaged spears. As well as the *gwayw awchdwn* ‘spear with a notched edge’ mentioned above, he describes Matthew Gough as ‘a man who shattered spears’ (*Gŵr a wnaeth gwewyr yn us*) and includes the breaking of spears (*torri gwayw*) amongst a list of the work (*gwaith*) of Sir Walter Herbert.⁶⁸ A broken spear is specifically associated with praise in Guto’s poem to Rhys ap Dafydd of Uwch Aeron:

Nod pybyr glod pawb o’r glêr
Ydiw hwn, wayw dau hanner.

*This is the target of all the poets’ bright praise, / he of the spear that is
broken in two halves.*⁶⁹

Although poets might sometimes refer to a particular incident when a spear was broken, as seems to be the case in a poem by Gruffudd Llwyd in praise of Owain Glyndŵr, the association of a patron with a broken spear or with spear-breaking was more often used in a general or stereotypical way to praise his military prowess as proven by past exploits (either real or imagined).⁷⁰ Indeed, so pervasive was the idea of spear-breaking as a

⁶⁵ Ibid. it is suggested that Sir Walter may have been looking after these lands for his older brother William, second earl of Pembroke. For other references to the use of spears against wrongdoers or to preserve law and order see *ibid.* 23.47–8 *Arglwydd dewr o gledd a dart / A cheidwad heddwch Edwart* ‘a bold lord with sword and dart [spear] / and keeper of Edward’s peace’; GLGC 22.1–2 *Y bwbach iach â’r gwayw us / a yrr bw ar rai beius* ‘The vigorous bogeyman [i.e. fearsome warrior] with spear [in] fragments terrifies the guilty’; cf. also the discussion of staves in the section on knives, staves and axes, below.

⁶⁶ GG.net 98.27.

⁶⁷ See *ibid.* (background note).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 55.27, 3.54, 27.29.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 11.33–4.

⁷⁰ GGLI 11.53–62; *ibid.* 55n, and cf. the less detailed mention of the breaking of Owain’s spear in IGP 9.52. For spear-breaking in earlier poetry, see Day, ‘Arfau’, 256–62.

symbol of fierce fighting that it could even be used to praise the effectiveness of armour, as in a poem to request a cuirass by Guto Powys.⁷¹

Although the wooden shafts of spears might break in a variety of circumstances and in differing types of combat, spear-breaking was particularly associated with the couched lance technique, in which the lance was held horizontally whilst charging at the enemy on horseback. Medieval literature, including Welsh prose tales, abounds with detailed, though often formulaic, descriptions of jousting with couched lances, in which the shattering of the lances is a major feature (another is the throwing of combatants to the ground, as discussed below).⁷² Indeed, in the later Middle Ages some tournament lances were made hollow or jointed so that they would readily shatter on impact.⁷³ As well as his references to spear-breaking, Guto’s references to horses in juxtaposition with spears probably also relate to the couched lance technique, as for example in his description of Sir William Herbert (later first earl of Pembroke): *Marchog yw meirch a gwewyr* ‘He is a knight of horses and spears’.⁷⁴ The simple mention of a horse, however, is not conclusive evidence for the use of a couched lance since light spears were also used on horseback in this period (see the discussion of the lancegay, below).

More specific evidence is found in two of Guto’s poems which mention a ‘lance-rest’ or *r(h)est* (< English *rest*), a projection attached to a jouster’s armour, on the right-hand side of the breastplate, which helped support the lance and prevent it from rebounding on impact.⁷⁵ The first poem, which also contains one of the references to spear-breaking noted above, describes Matthew Gough of Maelor in a battle on the outskirts of Rouen, with his spear in its rest (*Ym min Rhôn a’i wayw mewn rhest*).⁷⁶ Interestingly, the second poem, which refers to a lance-rest on the brigandine requested from Sieffrai Cyffin, also mentions Rouen, this time as the place of origin of the

⁷¹ GG.net 120.58 *Twrn wydr, tyr wayw’n nawdryll* ‘glass fit for an exploit, it will break a spear into nine fragments’.

⁷² R. Middleton, ‘Chwedl Geraint ab Erbin’, R. Bromwich et al. (eds.), *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff, 1991), 147–57; S. Davies, *Crefft y Cyfarwydd* (Caerdydd, 1995), 159–66; R. Reck, *The Aesthetics of Combat in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Rahden, 2010).

⁷³ D. Edge and J.M. Paddock, *Arms and Armour of the Medieval Knight* (London, 1996), 160.

⁷⁴ GG.net 20.27; see also *ibid.* 14.40, 23.35, 51.47–52, 75.55–6 and poem 83, *passim*.

⁷⁵ GPC s.v. *rest*², *rhest*² (b); OED Online s.v. *rest*, n.² 2.a; C. Blair, *European Armour circa 1066 to circa 1700* (London, 1958), 61; K. DeVries and R.D. Smith, *Medieval Military Technology* (second ed. Toronto, 2012), 77. The earliest example of the word in Welsh is in a poem by Iolo Goch in praise of Owain Glyndŵr, IGP 9.39–40 *Arwain rhest a phenffestin / A helm wen, gŵr hael am win* ‘wearing a rest and a mail cap / and a white helmet, a generous man with wine’, and later ones are in GHS 1.15–16 and GLGC 50.1–2 and 127.45–6. Cf. the use of *arést* (< English *arrest*) and *gwanas* to denote a lance-rest in poems by Gutun Owain and Tudur Aled, GO XVI.22n, 31 and 37; TA CXVIII.72n; GPC s.vv.

⁷⁶ GG.net 3.16.

lance-rest.⁷⁷ Ascribing a Continental origin to arms and armour would have served to draw attention not only to their quality but also to the wealth and sophistication of their owners, as in the case of the Milanese steel (*dur Melan*, or simply *melan*) mentioned in three of Guto's other poems.⁷⁸ Though such references need not always be taken literally, it is worth noting that Lewys Glyn Cothi, in another request poem for a brigandine, refers to his patron being armed 'in the style of Rouen' (*arfer Rhôn*).⁷⁹

The *brest ymwan* of Thomas ap Watkin in another poem may also have been armour used for jousting, although *ymwan*, as well as meaning 'to joust', could also denote other forms of combat.⁸⁰ Of the examples of this verb in Guto's works, the two that can be associated most confidently with the couched lance technique are those that also mention horses or spears, namely a couplet in his poem to the sons of Edward ap Dafydd of Bryncunallt, *O daw rhyw ymdaro 'rhawg / Ac ymwan ar feirch gemawg* 'If battle should ensue in the future, / with jousting upon jewelled horses',⁸¹ and a passage praising Sir Richard Gethin:

'... Ac ynnill â gwayw uniawn
Gair a chlod goruchel iawn,
Anturiaw, modd y daw dis,
Ymwan Pyr ym min Paris,
Pwyntiaw maelys, pwynt Melan;
Pobl y gŵr, pob elw a gân.'

'... and winning with unbending spear / fame and glory most exalted, / venturing, the same way as a die falls, / combat [jousting] beside Paris like that of Pyrrhus, / piercing mail armour, a point of Milanese steel; / this man's people, they get every profit.'⁸²

⁷⁷ Ibid. 98.43–4 *Brest dur o Baris dirion / Ac ar y frest rest o Rhôn* 'a steel breastplate from gracious Paris / and on the breastplate a rest from Rouen.' A lance-rest was not a common feature on a brigandine, but for examples, see C. Ffoulkes, *The Armourer and his Craft* (London, 1912), 50; Edge and Paddock, *Arms and Armour*, 161.

⁷⁸ GPC s.v. *melan*¹, *malen*¹ 'Milan (steel), also transf. of a steel weapon, chain-armour ...'; GG.net 1.27, 3.25, 73.2 and 11. Cf. 1.31 *browysedd Bresawnt* 'the splendour of gear from Brescia' (see *ibid.* for the interpretation of *Bresawnt* as Brescia, a town in Italy noted for armour production); *ibid.* 73.45 *Golau yw'r ferch o Galais* 'The girl from Calais is a bright one' (describing a sallet, a kind of helmet); GO XIII.43 *Dur caled o dir Kwlen* 'Hard steel from the region of Cologne'. Though the most important and influential armourers came from Italy and Germany there were several centres of armour production in France, including Rouen and Paris; see M. Pfaffenbichler, *Medieval Craftsmen: Armourers* (London, 1992), 22–3.

⁷⁹ GLCG 23.18 (this poem, however, makes no mention of a lance-rest). See further J. Day, 'The Imagery of the Brigandine in Two Fifteenth-century Welsh Request Poems', SC XLVII (forthcoming in 2013).

⁸⁰ GG.net 4.67; GPC s.v. *ymwanaf*: *ymwan(u)* (a) 'to joust, tilt, engage in single combat, fight, do battle'.

⁸¹ GG.net 103.27–8.

⁸² Ibid. 1.23–8. For further examples of *ymwan*, see *ibid.* 4.67, 34.24, 67.62, 76.18.

An earlier reference to jousting is found in a poem by Gruffudd Llwyd which envisages Owain Glyndŵr ‘jousting in a tournament, / bruising bodies, unhorsing a hundred’ (*Yn ymwan ar dwrneimant, / Yn briwio cyrff, yn bwrw cant*).⁸³ Although this description may be no more than an imaginative expression of the poet’s desire that Owain should be knighted (a desire which was never to be fulfilled),⁸⁴ a more detailed account of a joust in which a Welshman was victorious is found in a poem, probably dating from the 1430s, sung in praise of Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd Deuddwr of Collfryn. The portrayal of the patron rushing to defend ‘goodly Powys’ ([*P*]owys lân) against an Englishman’s oppression, along with the ultimate driving of the ‘race of Horsa’ into the marshes (*Aeth hil Hors yn y corsydd*) suggests a real-life skirmish rather than an organized tournament, although it is impossible to be certain as to the real significance of the events described.⁸⁵ The poet – probably Guto, although the attribution, too, is not entirely certain⁸⁶ – notes that he did not have the good fortune to witness the conflict in person,⁸⁷ but this does not prevent him from offering a detailed description of the action:

Troi blaen gwayw, graen o’i grwm,
Tua’i fwnwgl, tew fonwm,
Treiglo’r anfad benadur
Tros ei farch, pand trawsa’ fur?
Canu yna, garwa’ gŵr,
Gri a ‘mersil’ o’r Marswr.
Bwrw’r ail, ffyrf gynheiliad,
Bwrw’r trydydd, cynigydd cad.

*He pointed the tip of his spear, terrible was he in his hunched posture, / towards his neck, the fat lump, / toppled the heinous lord / off his steed, was he not a most oppressive chief? / Then he from the March, roughest of men, / uttered a cry and ‘mercy!’ / He struck [unhorsed] the second, staunch supporter, / struck [unhorsed] the third, offerer of combat.*⁸⁸

It is the verb *treiglo* (‘to turn’, ‘to roll’ or ‘to overthrow’) that is used to describe the throwing of Gruffudd Fychan’s first opponent from his horse, thereby sustaining the initial *t*-alliteration throughout the first four lines of this extract, but the poet uses another verb, *bwrw* (‘to strike’, ‘to throw’ or

⁸³ GGLI 12.77–8. There are no definite depictions of Welsh patrons fighting with couched lances in poetry composed before the fourteenth century, although some references could be interpreted in this way, see Day, ‘Arfau’, 240–56, 466–74.

⁸⁴ Williams, ‘More than “skimble-skamble stuff”’, 23–4.

⁸⁵ GG.net 83.8 and 67.

⁸⁶ Ibid. poem 83 (background note).

⁸⁷ Ibid. 83.49–54.

⁸⁸ Ibid. 83.39–46.

‘to overthrow’), to describe the fate of the next two men.⁸⁹ This is unsurprising since *bwrw* is very often found in prose descriptions of jousting. Sometimes it is used by itself to describe the unhorsing of an opponent but it also occurs in more detailed accounts of the same process, as for example in the story of Peredur:

Ny bu hwy no hynny, ymwan a orugant ac ny bu bell y buant,
Peredur a’e byrywys hyny uu dros pedrein y varch y’r llawr.

*And it was no longer than that, they fought, and they were not far,
Peredur overthrew him so that he was over his horse’s crupper to the
ground.*⁹⁰

Further probable examples of *bwrw* with the specific meaning ‘to unhorse’ are found in Guto’s references to Fulk Fitzwarine fighting on horseback with his spear (*iau*) in a poem of thanks for a horse and to Sir Roger Kynaston of Knockin ‘playing’ with spear (*gwayw*) and cuirass (*curas*) in a poem composed to celebrate his knighting.⁹¹ The latter reference no doubt reflects the strong association of jousting with knighthood in the wider contemporary culture (and literature), though it is important to note that in reality this was a combat technique often practised by men-at-arms who were never knighted, and indeed that many knights in this period never went to war.⁹²

The interpretation ‘to unhorse’ rather than simply ‘to strike’ is also a likely one where the verb *bwrw* expresses the fate of large numbers of opponents. Gruffudd Llwyd’s description of Owain Glyndŵr unhorsing a hundred men (*bwrw cant*) in a tournament has already been mentioned, and Guto himself uses the same expression in his praise poem to Matthew Gough of Maelor, whom he describes as *Broch a’i bâr coch yn bwrw cant* ‘a badger with his bloodstained spear striking [unhorsing] a hundred men’.⁹³ Defeat of a hundred enemies represents a kind of poetic exaggeration common in praise poetry, conveying the vague meaning ‘many’. The five thousand enemies said to have been ‘unhorsed’ or ‘struck down’ by Dafydd ab Edmwnd in Guto’s satire on his fellow poet, by contrast, take

⁸⁹ GPC s.vv. *bwriaf*: *bwrw* 1(a) ‘to throw, cast, hurl’, (b) ‘to hit, strike, knock’ and (c) ‘to throw down, overthrow, overcome’ and *treiglaf*, *treigliaf*: *treigl(i)o* (a) ‘to turn, roll, tumble ...; repulse, overthrow’.

⁹⁰ G.W. Goetinck (ed.), *Historia Peredur vab Efrafc* (Caerdydd, 1976), 16.8–10; for the translation and further discussion, see Reck, *Aesthetics of Combat*, 123–5. The formulaic nature of such accounts is also discussed in Middleton, ‘Chwedl Geraint ab Erbin’; Davies, *Crefft y Cyfarwydd*, 159–66.

⁹¹ GG.net 51.45–8 (see 30n above); *ibid.* 79.47–8 *Gwarae â’i wayw a’i guras / Y bu’r gŵr a bwrw ei gas* ‘The warrior played with his spear and cuirass / and toppled his foe.’

⁹² A. Curry, ‘English Armies in the Fifteenth Century’, *eadem* and M. Hughes (eds.), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge, 1994), 39–68.

⁹³ GG.net 3.9. As noted above, this poem also mentions a lance-rest and the breaking of spears.

exaggeration to a deliberately absurd level, as befits the sarcastic tone of this poem.⁹⁴ Guto seems to have been equally ready to make mockery of himself through his light-hearted boasting in his poem of thanks for a horse:

Mae gorwydd ym o gyrrir
Hacnai hardd, pe cawn iau hir
Ac onwayw Ffwg a'i anian,
Ac i lawr fil o'r glêr fân!

*There is a horse for me if a handsome hackney is sent, / if I were to receive a long lance / and Fulk's ash spear and his spirit, / and thousands of the petty poets would go down!*⁹⁵

Guto was probably getting on in years when he composed this poem, as he mentions his failing eyesight in the preceding lines, and indeed there is no evidence to suggest that he ever did fight using a couched lance even in his youth. Even so, his metaphorical, hypothetical prowess at jousting may well reflect the fighting spirit of an old soldier as well as a successful poet's pride and confidence in his own superiority.

The references to the couched lance technique described above involve weapons denoted variously by the words *ffon*, *gwayw* (and *onwayw*), *iau* and *pâr*, but none of these can be said to be specific terms for this type of lance, and neither are they the only terms that might be used in this context. Writers of Welsh medieval prose tales often used *glaif* or *paladr* to denote a couched lance, as well as *gwayw*; and even the word *dart*, which could denote a javelin or even an arrow, was used by the poet Gruffudd Llwyd, for example, to describe what is clearly a couched lance belonging to Owain Glyndŵr.⁹⁶ The three instances of *dart* in Guto's poems probably also denote spears, but do not provide any further detail which might allow identification of any particular type of spear or method of fighting.⁹⁷ The examples of the word *glaif* in Guto's works are similarly lacking in useful context, and indeed it is not even certain that a spear is the weapon described.⁹⁸

One word used by Guto which does imply a particular type of spear is *lownsgae*, a borrowing from the Middle English *launcegai* or 'lancegay'. Guto's is the only surviving example in Welsh but the English word is well

⁹⁴ Ibid. 67.7–8 *Bwriaist ti wŷr, brau ystŵnd, / Bumil, Dafydd ab Iemwnd* 'You struck down men, frail tub, / five thousand of them, Dafydd ab Edmwnd.'

⁹⁵ Ibid. 51.49–52. Cf. the 'jousting' between rival poets in debate poems by Hywel Swrdwal and Llawdden, also involving a request for a horse, GHS poems 18 and 19.

⁹⁶ GPC s.v. *dart*, *dard* 'dart, javelin, spear, arrow'; GGL 11.61–2 *Drylliaist, duliaist ar dalwrn, / Dy ddart hyd ymron dy ddwrn* 'You broke, you struck upon [the] field, / your spear almost as far as your fist.' The preceding lines refer to the spear as a *gwayw* and an *onnen*.

⁹⁷ GG.net 1.29 *Glew oedd ef a gloyw ei ddart* 'He was bold and his dart [/spear] was bright'; ibid. 23.47 *Arghwydd dewr o gledd a dart* 'a bold lord with sword and dart [/spear]'; ibid. 95.25 *Od eurwyd dyn â dart dur* 'But if a man was gilded formerly with a steel spear'.

⁹⁸ See 36n above.

attested from the late fourteenth century onwards, itself deriving from the Old French *lancegay*.⁹⁹ The lancegay seems to have been a light lance which could even be thrown on occasion, its convenience and versatility making it a popular weapon with mounted men-at-arms, particularly when they needed to travel fast in difficult terrain or when they were not expecting to meet heavily armed opponents.¹⁰⁰ The [*t*]eg *lownsgae aur* ‘fair and golden lancegay’ in Guto’s praise poem for John Talbot, second earl of Shrewsbury, is mentioned in juxtaposition with *Glyn Ysgôt* ‘Scotsman’s glen’, which may suggest that Talbot favoured this type of weapon for travelling or campaigning in Scotland.¹⁰¹ It is possible, however, that Guto used *lownsgae* figuratively to represent Talbot himself, either because he or his men were accustomed to use such weapons or simply because it was a novel and interesting word.

Though most of the spears in Guto’s poems are associated with, or represent, his wealthy patrons, there are a few exceptions. Mention has already been made of his description – not to be taken literally – of his own fighting with a spear on horseback, and that of his fellow poet Dafydd ab Edmwnd. In a more serious context, he refers to the armaments of the soldiers (probably mounted men-at-arms) who followed Siôn Hanmer of Halghton and Llai:

Can meirch lliw’r eleirch lle’r êl,
Cannwr rhif, canwayw rhyfel.

*one hundred horses the colour of swans wherever he goes, / one hundred soldiers, a hundred war spears.*¹⁰²

In Guto’s poem to request a brigandine on behalf of Dafydd Llwyd of Abertanad, by contrast, the spear of a stereotypical English soldier is used to symbolize one of the threats against which this iron-reinforced garment provided protection.¹⁰³

The spears associated with patrons in praise poetry, too, would often have been stereotypical and symbolic, reflecting not only the chivalric ideals of the lance-bearing medieval knight but also the centuries-old conventions of the bardic tradition. Many such references may have been intended to evoke a generalized heroic idea of the spear-bearing Welsh warrior rather than the specific imagery of the couched lance (or indeed any other con-

⁹⁹ GPC s.v. *lownsgae*; OED Online s.v. *lancegay*.

¹⁰⁰ D. Scott-Macnab, ‘Sir Thopas and his Lancegay’, G. Morgan (ed.), *Chaucer in Context: A Golden Age of English Poetry* (Bern, 2012), 109–34.

¹⁰¹ GG.net 78.54 (and explanatory note); cf. the role of the light horsemen known as hobelars in the Anglo-Scottish wars of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, see J.F. Lydon, ‘The Hobelar: An Irish Contribution to Mediaeval Warfare’, *Irish Sword*, 2 (1954–6), 12–16; C. McNamee, *The Wars of the Bruces: Scotland, England and Ireland 1306–1328* (second ed. Edinburgh, 2006), 23–4.

¹⁰² GG.net 75.55–6.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 98.40, discussed near the end of the section on bow and arrows, below.

temporary type of spear). More generally, it is also worth noting that the fighting men praised in the poetry need not always be imagined as being on horseback, as is made clear in Guto’s poem to request a hawk from Huw Bulkeley:

Dewr ar farch, alarch elin,
Dewr ar draed o doir i’r drin;
Dewr ar fôr â dur arf wyd,
A drudach ar dir ydwyd.

*You are brave on your horse, a curve like a swan, / brave on your feet if you come to battle; / brave on the sea with a steel weapon, / and even more brave on land.*¹⁰⁴

Although no doubt intended primarily to praise the patron’s courage in the most all-encompassing terms, this passage very much reflects the realities of late medieval warfare. From the early fourteenth century onwards the well-organized integration of dismounted men-at-arms and archers had made the massed cavalry charge increasingly ineffective, so that even those who possessed the horse and equipment needed for the couched lance technique would generally fight on foot in large-scale battles.¹⁰⁵ Even so, jousting remained highly regarded as a means by which an individual could demonstrate his courage and prowess and continued to be practised in small-scale skirmishes or sorties, as well as on the tournament field.¹⁰⁶ There seems, also, to have been something of a revival in the use of cavalry during the Wars of the Roses, perhaps reflecting improvements in horse armour.¹⁰⁷

Swords

The sword, by contrast, retained its importance throughout the Middle Ages. The art of fencing was taught and valued, and during the course of the fifteenth century lighter swords were increasingly worn in daily life, both as status symbols and for self-defence.¹⁰⁸ Not surprisingly, swords are mentioned fairly often by the poets, although the 30 or so examples in Guto’s poems represent only about half as many references as are found for

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 60.29–32.

¹⁰⁵ C.J. Rogers, ‘The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years’ War’, *The Journal of Military History*, 57 (1993), 241–78; A. Curry, ‘Guns and Goddams: Was There a Military Revolution in Lancastrian Normandy 1415–50?’, *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 8 (2010), 171–88.

¹⁰⁶ A. Ayton, ‘English Armies in the Fourteenth Century’, Curry and Hughes (eds.), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications*, 21–38; Curry, ‘Guns and Goddams’, 180.

¹⁰⁷ A. Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses: Military Activity and English Society, 1452–97* (London, 1981), 178–81; A.W. Boardman, *The Medieval Soldier in the Wars of the Roses* (Stroud, 1998), 134–5.

¹⁰⁸ DeVries and Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, 18–24; eidem, *Medieval Weapons: An Illustrated History of their Impact* (Santa Barbara, 2007), 185; Huws, *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch*, 68–9.

spears. This may relate in part to the relative paucity of available words which could be used to denote a sword. In contrast to the many terms for a spear, which the poets could use to enrich their poems and meet the needs of rhyme and alliteration, the only words regularly used with the specific meaning 'sword' are *cledd* and the related forms *cleddau* and *cleddyf*, all three of which are used by Guto. Other words which may denote swords in his works are *llafn* 'blade', *llain* 'blade, sword, spear' and perhaps *glaif* 'spear, sword, ?billhook', and swords may be implied in some of the references to generic 'weapons' using the term *arf*.¹⁰⁹ The particular importance and significance of swords is reflected in the fact that they were often given individual names, and one of these, *Hauteclere* or *Hawd y Clŷr*, belonging to the hero Oliver from the tales of Charlemagne, is mentioned in Guto's poem to request a hunting knife.¹¹⁰ Similar comparisons of knives or swords with the swords of past heroes are found in poems by Dafydd ap Gwilym, Iolo Goch, Rhys Goch Eryri and Gutun Owain.¹¹¹

As was the case with spears, there is little direct description of swords in Guto's poetry. Such terms as [g]*wyargledd* 'bloody sword' and *diwyrgledd* 'unswerving sword' serve chiefly to praise the wielder's prowess in battle, whilst the poet's own *bywiocledd* 'lively sword' no doubt reflects his own energy and skill as a swordsman, in his youth.¹¹² Similarly, the use of the adjective *dur* with *diwyrgledd* was most likely intended to describe the tough, hard or cruel nature of the weapon or its wielder rather than the specific material of which the sword was made, although there may also be a suggestion that the blade is of particularly good-quality steel.¹¹³

A more specific significance was attached to some of the poets' references to swords. Golden swords, along with golden belts, spurs and collars, symbolized elevation to knighthood, as in Guto's poem to Sir Roger Kynaston of Knockin:

¹⁰⁹ For *llafn* see GG.net 110.41 *Y llafn oedd i Ruffudd Llwyd* 'The blade which was owned by Gruffudd Llwyd', and for *llain* and *glaif* see above, 35 and 36nn. The meaning 'sword' is particularly likely for the *arf* ibid. 29.37 *Tyn d'arf eto 'n y dwyrain* 'Draw your weapon again in the east'; cf. ibid. 30.60 *A dwyn clod o dynnu cledd* 'and bearing fame for drawing a sword'.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 76.57–8 *Dwyn arf fal adain eryr / Ar hyd clun, wŷr Hawd y Clŷr* 'Wearing a weapon like the wing of an eagle / on the hip, grand-daughter of Hauteclere'; cf. the comparison to Arthur's knife, *Carnwennan*, ibid. 65–6 *Ennill a wnaeth Carnwennan / Egin dur o'r gynau dân* 'Carnwennan gave birth / to steel shoots from the burning fire.'

¹¹¹ *Hawd y Clŷr* (or *Hawt-clŷr*, or *Rhawd y Clŷr*), *Durendardd* (Roland's sword), *Cwrseus* (the sword of Otiel, another hero of the Charlemagne stories), Julius Caesar's sword *Angau Coch* or *Angau Glas* (or *Glas Angau*) and Arthur's *Caledfwlch* are all mentioned in one or more of these four poems (DG.net 71.24 and 44, IGP 11.37–48, GRhGE 5.71–8 and GO XVII.23 and 30). Various lists of heroes' swords survive in manuscripts, including one, Llst 28, written by Gutun Owain; see Huws, *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch*, 178; R. Bromwich, 'Cyfeiriadau Dafydd ap Gwilym at Chwedl a Rhamant', YB XII (1982), 57–76; GO XVII.23n.

¹¹² GG.net 78.2 and 9; ibid. 110.65; see below for further references to Guto's own sword.

¹¹³ Ibid. 78.9; cf. Guto's references to *Melan*, 78n above.

Euro'i wregis cyn mis Mai,
 Euro'i gledd a ryglyddai.
 Euro ei draed ar y drin
 Y bu'r ynys a'r brenin,
 Eurlliw yw gwar y llew gwyn,
 Iarll Maelor fo'r llew melyn!

*He deserved to have his belt / and sword gilded before May. / The island
 and the king / gilded his feet in the battle, / golden-hued is the white
 lion's nape, / may the golden lion be earl of Maelor!*¹¹⁴

Examples of medieval swords with gilding on their hilts survive to this day, and indeed gold-ornamented swords are also mentioned in medieval Welsh law texts.¹¹⁵ Not all of the poets' references to 'golden' swords need be taken literally, even so. The word *eurgledd*, used by Guto as an epithet for the twelfth-century prince the Lord Rhys in a passage emphasizing the Welsh descent of John Talbot, second earl of Shrewsbury, is best regarded as a conventional epithet of praise conveying Rhys's general 'splendour'.¹¹⁶

Alongside its links with knighthood and other élite connotations, a sword could also be a more general symbol of a fighting man's status and abilities. Grasping a sword-hilt and drawing the sword were easily understood signs of eagerness or readiness for battle and both are mentioned by Guto. He describes the sons of Llywelyn ap Hwlcyn as *Pum llew'r glod, pum llaw ar gledd* 'five lions of the praise, five hands on a sword', and skilfully juxtaposes the drawing of a sword with the earning of praise or glory in his poem to Phylib ap Gwilym Llwyd of Tregunter, *A dwyn clod o dynnu cledd* 'and bearing fame for drawing a sword'.¹¹⁷ Swords were also associated with justice and even with righteousness, as explained in a poem by Hywel

¹¹⁴ GG.net 79.63–8. The 'gilding' of the feet represents the wearing of golden spurs (see GGI 342 and cf. GG.net 35.11–12 *Nid anos yt, myn Dwynwen, / Dwyn aur nog ysbardun wen* 'It would be no greater challenge for you, by St Dwynwen, / to wear gold rather than a silver spur') and the 'golden-hued' nape is likely to denote a golden collar, cf. GMBen 16.65–6 (Owain Waed Da) *Oll ar lled gweled a gair / Ar ei fwnwgl aur fynwair* 'From every direction it will be possible to see / the golden collar about his neck'; *ibid.* 62 and 66nn. Cf. also GLGC 129.52 *eurer dy fysedd a'th gledd a'th glog* 'may your fingers and your sword and your cloak be made golden'.

¹¹⁵ E. Oakeshott, *The Sword in the Age of Chivalry* (Woodbridge, 1964); A.W. Wade-Evans (ed.), *Welsh Medieval Law* (Oxford, 1909), 105, lines 6–7; S.J. Williams and J.E. Powell (goln), *Llyfr Blegywryd* (Caerdydd, 1942), 98, lines 15–16; H.D. Emanuel (ed.), *The Latin Texts of the Welsh Laws* (Cardiff, 1967), 152.

¹¹⁶ GG.net 78.39–40 *Mae prins Gwynedd yn d'insael, / Arglwydd Rys eurgledd yw'r ail* 'The prince of Gwynedd is on your seal, / the Lord Rhys of golden sword is the second.' There are several examples of the word *eurgledd* in the works of the Poets of the Princes and their fourteenth-century successors but it seems to have been less common in the fifteenth century. It is possible therefore that Guto chose this word for its honourably old-fashioned connotations.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* 63.60, 30.60; for further examples of the alliterative *cledd(y) / clod* juxtaposition in Guto's poems, see *ibid.* 67.27, 77.37, 98.12, and for the *cledd(yf) / clod* combination and the placing of hands on swords in earlier poetry, see Day, 'Arfau', 312–13, 328.

Swrddwal describing the dubbing ceremony by which William Herbert the Younger was made a knight of the Bath:

Hawdd yw ym, caf heddiw win,
Lle 'dd wyf, ddeall ei ddeufin:
Y naill fin llym, ail llafn Llŷr,
Draig las, gyda'r eglwyswyr,
A'r nall, mae 'neall yn ôl,
Wrth fawd y gyfraith fydol.

*It is easy for me – I shall have wine today, / where I am – to understand its [i.e. the sword's] two edges: / the one a sharp edge, like the blade of Llŷr, / a bright dragon, with the churchmen, / and the other – my understanding is hindmost – / for the use of the secular law.*¹¹⁸

The role of a sword (and spear) in law enforcement seems to be implied in Guto's poem to William's father, namely William Herbert, first earl of Pembroke, whom he describes as *Arglwydd dewr o gledd a dart / A cheidwad heddwch Edwart* 'a bold lord with sword and dart [/spear] / and keeper of Edward's peace',¹¹⁹ and the 'injury' mentioned in a line from his praise poem to David Mathew of Llandaf, *Ni ddial clwyf ni ddeily cledd* '[a hand] which does not hold a sword cannot avenge an injury', might also relate to the upholding of justice, although a personal or proverbial sense is perhaps more likely.¹²⁰ A sword has similar significance in a poem composed by Guto after the deaths by execution of the elder William Herbert (1469) and Sir Roger Vaughan (1471). Here it seems that the 'sword of retribution' (*galanas gledd*) represents Thomas, Sir Roger's eldest son, although no doubt the poet has it in mind that a real sword might be used to bring about this retribution.¹²¹ This sword may even echo in some way the 'weapon or sword' (*arf neu gledd*) mentioned in Guto's earlier elegy as being the instrument of William Herbert's execution.¹²²

¹¹⁸ GHS 6.43–8.

¹¹⁹ GG.net 23.47–8.

¹²⁰ Ibid. 17.46; the 'hand' seems itself to be metaphorical according to the subsequent lines of the poem, in which the patron is likened to a thumb and his sons to four fingers (see 17.48n).

¹²¹ Ibid. 25.25 (and background note).

¹²² Ibid. 24.31–2 *O rhoed, lle bu anrhydedd, / Ar fwnwgl iarll arf neu gledd* 'If weapon or sword was placed, where once was honour, / upon an earl's neck'. Although a sword, wielded by an expert executioner brought from Calais, was famously used in the execution of Ann Boleyn, the axe was the weapon normally used for beheadings in England, see E. Ives, *Ann Boleyn* (Oxford, 1986), 401. The fact that contemporary chronicles do not record which type of weapon was used for William Herbert's execution suggests that an axe was indeed used, since the rarer sword might be expected to have excited comment, and the use of a block, mentioned by H. Ellis (ed.), *Hall's Chronicle* (London, 1809), 274, also suggests an axe rather than a sword (I thank Dr Barry J. Lewis for lending me his research notes on the battle of Edgecote / Banbury and the fate of the earl). The vagueness of Guto's reference to a 'sword or weapon' may reflect a tactful reluctance to mention the actual instrument used.

Figurative references to patrons as swords are common in Guto’s works, reflecting the symbolic and practical importance of these weapons.¹²³ Even men of the cloth might be described as ‘swords’, as in his praise of Abbot Rhys ap Dafydd of Strata Florida whom he describes as [c]leddau abadau byd ‘the sword of all the world’s abbots’.¹²⁴ There are several other examples, including Guto’s elegy for Sir Benet, parson of Corwen, which twice refers to the subject as a sword with the breaking of the weapon at the hilt symbolizing his death:

Torri cledd, dewredd i’m dwrn,
Yn ei said ar nos Sadwrn.
Y cleddau, pan ei claddwyd,
Oedd capten o ŵr llên llwyd.

*the breaking of a sword, source of strength for my fist, I at the hilt on Saturday night. I When the sword was buried, I he was a leader and pious scholar.*¹²⁵

In the same way, the *cledd* that is described in Guto’s elegy for his fellow poet Llywelyn ab y Moel as being buried along with him is most likely either a metaphor for Llywelyn himself or a symbol of his fighting abilities, contrasting with the *cerdd* in the subsequent line:

Mae arch yn Ystrad Marchell
Ym mynwent cwfent a’u cell,
Ac yn honno gan hannerch
A saith gelfyddyd y serch,
A chledd, dewredd dihareb,
A cherdd – yn iach ni chwardd neb –
Lle rhoed o waith llawer rhaw
Llywelyn ...

In Strata Marcella there is a coffin I in the cemetery of a monastery and their cells, I and in it a hundred love greetings, I and the seven arts of love, I and a sword, proverbial valour, I and a poem – no one laughs

¹²³ Particularly clear examples of figurative usage are found in GG.net 17.9–10 *Agoriad wyd ar Gaerdyf I A’i chlo addwyn a’i chleddyf* ‘You are the key to Cardiff I and its splendid lock and its sword’ (in praise of David Mathew of Llandaf); *ibid.* 52.17 *Gwae ninnau am gleddau’n gwlad* ‘woe to us for the loss of our country’s sword’ (elegy for Gruffudd Fychan of Corsygedol). Other examples which may also be figurative, although less obviously so, include the [g]wyargledd ‘bloody sword’ and diwyrgledd ‘unswerving sword’ mentioned above (*ibid.* 78.2 and 9).

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* 8.21.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* 47.3–6; cf. *ibid.* 70.21–2 *Llyna baun llên a bonedd, I Llyfr a chloch, llaw fawr a chledd* ‘behold a peacock of doctrine and pedigree, I book and bell, great hand and sword’ (in praise of Sir Hywel ap Dai of Northop); *ibid.* 77.37–8 *Cledd gwŷr yr eglwys a’u clod, I Colector ysgolheictod* ‘Defender [sword] of ecclesiasts and their renown, I collector of scholarship’ (in praise of Abbot Thomas of Shrewsbury). In the case of Sir Bened, further military references in other poems may suggest that he had served as a soldier in his youth (*ibid.* 43.6n).

*joyfully – / where was laid by the work of many spades / Llywelyn ...*¹²⁶

In either case, the sword forms an appropriate part of the elegy for this poet who, by his own account, fought for Owain Glyndŵr's cause.¹²⁷

The reference to Guto's fist in the elegy for Sir Benet, quoted above, suggests that he himself was accustomed to wield a sword, and there is also evidence for this in other poems. All date from long after the time of his military service in Normandy: the elegy for Sir Benet would have been sung in 1464 or soon after and four other poems which more specifically mention Guto's sword were probably composed in the 1480s, by which time he would have been an old man.¹²⁸ In a reply to the satire of his fellow poet Llywelyn ap Gutun he accuses Llywelyn of coveting his cloak and his sword (*Mae'n chwannog i'm clog a'm cledd*), and his practice of wearing a sword is also mentioned in passing in his poem to thank Rhisiart Cyffin for a purse, which he wears 'above the thigh and the sword' (*uwchlaw clun a chledd*).¹²⁹

Guto's sword features most prominently in his poem of thanks for a buckler given to him by Dafydd ab Ieuan, abbot of Valle Crucis. Bucklers were often associated with swords in the poetry, the two being used together for fencing and duelling, and also carried for self-defence.¹³⁰ How much practical use Guto had for either weapon at this late stage in his life may be doubted, but he clearly appreciated the gift of the buckler even if it served as no more than a poignant reminder of his youthful strength and exploits, and he describes both it and his sword as if they were functional items to be worn and used every day.¹³¹ He refers to the buckler as *olwyn y cledd* 'a wheel for the sword' and describes it being placed upon [g]wain neu groes 'scabbard or cross', with the latter term denoting the cross guard of a sword's hilt.¹³² Elsewhere in the same poem Guto uses the terms *byr gledd* 'short sword' and *ysgïen* 'knife, small sword', each suggesting a small, light weapon.¹³³ The poem ends with Guto's wish to have his buckler and his *bywiocledd* depicted in stone upon his grave, with the 'lively sword' perhaps

¹²⁶ Ibid. 82.1–8.

¹²⁷ See GSCyf 78–81 and poems 9 and 10; cf. Rhys Goch Eryri's description of Llywelyn, also in an elegy, as *Dewr a chryf, durwayw awch wraidd* 'brave and strong, steely spear of brave severity', GRhGE 10.22. There are further suggestions of Llywelyn's renown as a soldier in the debate poems between him and Rhys, one of which mentions his sword, probably representing Llywelyn himself, see *ibid.* 7.1–2, 8.1 and especially 105 *A chriaw clod ochrawg gledd* 'and proclaim the praise of the sharp-edged sword'.

¹²⁸ GG.net poems 58, 65, 110 and 116.

¹²⁹ Ibid. 65.40, 58.56.

¹³⁰ Edwards and Blair, 'Welsh Bucklers'; Blair, *European Armour*, 182.

¹³¹ GG.net poem 110 (explanatory notes).

¹³² Ibid. 110.25 and 50; cf. *ibid.* 76.41 *ysgell groesgam* 'a pointed blade like a bent cross [thistle with a bent cross]' (describing a hunting knife); see also GPC s.v. *croes* 3(c).

¹³³ GG.net 110.43 and 59; see GPC s.v. *ysgïen*; OED Online s.v. *skene*, n.1; H.L. Blackmore, *Hunting Weapons* (London 1971), 53–4. Guto'r Glyn and Gutun Owain use the word (y)sgïen in request poems for hunting knives, see GG.net 76.39 and GO XIII.35.

intended to provide a contrast with the stillness of death and stone, as well as emphasizing Guto’s military prowess and vigour in his younger days:

A’m bwcled a’m bywioledd
Yn arfau maen ar fy medd

*with my buckler and lively sword / as arms of stone upon my grave.*¹³⁴

These lines may have been inspired by depictions of swords and shields (albeit shields of a different type) on early fourteenth-century grave slabs at Valle Crucis, particularly the fine example commemorating Madog ap Gruffudd (d. 1306).¹³⁵ Though it seems unlikely that Guto seriously expected to receive such an elaborate and expensive (and old-fashioned) memorial himself, even the idea that he should be commemorated in such a way provides an interesting insight into his character. He himself, however, no doubt intended it first and foremost as a powerful expression of his gratitude for the abbot’s gift.

The only reference to Guto actually using a sword, or at least threatening to do so, occurs in one of his last poems. Here he defends his place at Valle Crucis against poets who are of higher lineage but who lack his own poetic prowess: *Awen bennach no’u bonedd / A fyn cleirch wrth fin y cledd* ‘It is a muse more elevated than their lineage / that an old decrepit man demands by his sword-blade.’¹³⁶ It seems unlikely, however, that this was intended to be taken literally as a threat of violence. Aside from the fact that this would hardly be appropriate behaviour within the peaceful precincts of an abbey, Guto himself refers to his infirmity not only in these lines but also in an earlier passage from the same poem, where he also mentions his blindness.¹³⁷ It is far more likely that he mentions the sword in order to evoke his past reputation as a formidable fighting man – there may even be an echo of the old custom of a warrior swearing an oath upon his sword.¹³⁸ He thereby calls to mind one of the ways in which he was (once) able to inflict harm before turning, in the subsequent lines, to a more directly threatening description of his continued ability to satirize with tongue, teeth and jaws.

Guto does not tell us whether or not he fought with a sword during his military service in Normandy, but he may well have done so – the professional archers of his day were expected to be equipped with swords and daggers as well as bows, and their fighting skills were not confined to archery.¹³⁹ Perhaps he even kept, in later life, the sword that he had carried

¹³⁴ GG.net 110.65–6; see *ibid.* poem 110 (background note).

¹³⁵ C.A. Gresham, *Medieval Stone Carving in North Wales* (Cardiff, 1968), no. 22 and *passim*.

¹³⁶ GG.net 116.51–2.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.* 116.45–8.

¹³⁸ See H.R. Ellis Davidson, *The Sword in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1962), 76; K. DeVries, *Medieval Military Technology* (Hadleigh, 1992), 22; Day, ‘Arfau’, 131.

¹³⁹ Both sword and dagger, as well as a bow and quiver (of arrows), were amongst the

in France, though it is also possible that he acquired another sword with self-defence, or status, in mind. It would certainly not have been regarded as unusual for a poet to possess such a weapon. Even Dafydd ap Gwilym, that most unwarlike of poets, devoted an entire poem to his sword, which might well have had a real-life existence as well as a metaphorical, symbolic one, and swords (for the poet's own use) are the subject of poems of request or thanks by Dafydd Llwyd of Mathafarn, Gutun Owain and Lewys Glyn Cothi.¹⁴⁰ A further reference to a sword associated with a poet in Guto's own works is the *aur gleddy'r glod* 'golden sword of glory' in his satire on Dafydd ab Edmwnd, but this sarcastic subversion of two of the standard stock-items of heroic praise (*eurgledd*, and the juxtaposition of *cledd* and *clod*) need not be taken literally – indeed, it is probably a figurative allusion to Dafydd himself.¹⁴¹

Shields

The clearest description of a shield in Guto's poems is provided by his poem of thanks for the buckler given to him by Abbot Dafydd ab Ieuan of Valle Crucis, which mentions the buckler's round shape, its boss, its rivets, and the metal ribs and circles which form a lattice pattern on its surface.¹⁴² As well as the four instances of the word [*b*]wclod 'buckler' in this poem,¹⁴³ Guto also used several other words for a shield, the most common being [*t*]arian 'shield' which he uses eight times, along with a single example of the related adjective *tarianog* 'bearing a shield'.¹⁴⁴ Also represented in his works are *aes* (in the compound *aestew* '(with) strong [/stout] shield'), *aesawr* 'shield' and *rhod* '(round) shield'.¹⁴⁵ With a total of no more than 19 references, shields are less commonly mentioned in Guto's poems than spears or swords (or bows and arrows), in contrast to their great promin-

equipment that English archers were expected to possess according to a muster of the garrison of Bayeux dated 17 September 1434 (BnF fr. 25771/893; I thank Professor Anne Curry for providing me with this reference). For the use of swords by fifteenth-century archers, see further A. Curry, *Agincourt: A New History* (third ed. Stroud, 2010), 71, 255; eadem, 'Guns and Goddams', 179–80; R. Hardy, *Longbow: A Social and Military History* (fourth ed. Sparkford, 2006), 116–17, 121; M. Strickland and R. Hardy, *The Great Warbow: From Hastings to the Mary Rose* (Stroud, 2011), 383; Boardman, *Medieval Soldier*, 136–7.

¹⁴⁰ DG.net poem 71; GDLI poem 5; GO poem XVII; GLCG poem 209; see Huws, *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch*, 235–6.

¹⁴¹ GG.net 67.27; for another possible reference by Guto to a fellow poet's sword, see *ibid.* 110.41–2 *Y llafn oedd i Ruffudd Llwyd / Yn wyth ymladd ni theimlwyd* 'The blade which was owned by Gruffudd Llwyd / was not felt in eight battles.' It is by no means certain, however, that it is the poet Gruffudd Llwyd that he had in mind as this was also the name of a famous soldier and Welsh leader, Sir Gruffudd Llwyd of Tregarnedd, see *ibid.* 41n.

¹⁴² See further *ibid.* poem 110 (background note).

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* 110.22, 39, 55 and 65.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 12.61, 19.31, 34 and 38, 48.21, 58.45, 67.23, 95.39; *tarianog* is *ibid.* 1.14.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 42.57 *aestew*; *ibid.* 14.39, 78.47 *aesawr*. For *rhod* see 150n below.

ence in the works of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Poets of the Princes where they are the second most common type of military equipment, after spears.¹⁴⁶ This difference no doubt reflects the actual decline in the usage of shields in warfare in the later Middle Ages, due to the increased effectiveness and availability of plate armour.¹⁴⁷

As far as his praise poems are concerned, Guto seems to have drawn his vocabulary and imagery for shields very much from the older bardic tradition. The word *rhod* has several meanings including ‘wheel’, ‘circle’, ‘circuit’ or even ‘world’ as well as ‘shield’, and clearly suggests a circular form.¹⁴⁸ It could, therefore, readily have been applied to the Welsh bucklers of Guto’s day, but this was not its original meaning in the context of shields: the Poets of the Princes used *rhod* to denote an earlier type of round shield, made of wood and often, it seems, with painted decoration.¹⁴⁹ Whilst there is no reason to suppose that Guto himself had any particular interest in the material culture of earlier centuries, he may well have considered *rhod* as an archaic word and therefore an appropriate one to describe the shields of the time of King Arthur: *Arthur a rôl wrth ei raid / Er y dewraf rod euraid* ‘Arthur gave according to need / a shield of gold to the bravest’.¹⁵⁰

Another word often found in earlier poetry is *aes* ‘shield’ and this was also used by Guto in association with Arthur, in the epithet *Arthur aestew* ‘Arthur with his strong [stout] shield’.¹⁵¹ The related word *aesawr* ‘shield(s)’, by contrast, is found in a contemporary context in poems to John Talbot and to Sir Rhys ap Tomas of Abermarlais, the first of whom is addressed as *baedd dur aesawr* ‘boar with a steel shield’ whilst the second is compared to *sŷr aesawr* ‘the stars of a shield’, perhaps referring to the bright rivets of a buckler.¹⁵² As for the *dur aesawr* in the poem to John Talbot, this

¹⁴⁶ Day, ‘Arfau’, 211, 347.

¹⁴⁷ Blair, *European Armour*, 182.

¹⁴⁸ GPC s.v. *rhod*¹.

¹⁴⁹ J. Day, ‘Shields in Welsh Poetry up to c.1300: Decoration, Shape and Significance’, SC XLV (2011), 27–52.

¹⁵⁰ GG.net 95.23–4; cf. the association of a *[rh]ôn* ‘spear’ with Arthur *ibid.* 106.39–40, see *ibid.* 39n, and 28n above. Further examples of *rhod* ‘shield’ may perhaps be found in GG.net 57.5–6 *Proffwyd, ac aelwyd Gwilym, / Penrhyn dŵr; pwy un rhod ym?* ‘and Gwilym’s home, prophet of Penrhyn tower; / who is a better fierce warrior [/?shield] for me?’; *ibid.* 76.20 *Rhod ar Ysgôt rhydraws gynt* ‘a fierce fighter [/?shield] against an unruly Scot’. These could represent figurative usage of *rhod* ‘(round) shield’ to refer to the patron as a warrior or defender, but the wide range of possible meanings for *rhod* makes the connection with shields uncertain (see the editors’ translations and notes for these lines). Though there are a few examples of *rhod* ‘shield’ in fourteenth-century poetry (GC 2.118, GDC 15.15, GGMD i 4.86 and GGMD iii 2.3), this meaning was rare in the works of Guto’s contemporaries.

¹⁵¹ GG.net 42.57. There are no examples of *aestew* in earlier poetry but for other compounds containing *aes*, including *aesdur* ‘steely shield’, *aestrai* ‘(with) broken shield’ and *aestromrudd* ‘(with) heavy bloodstained shield’, see Day, ‘Arfau’, Atodiad Ib.

¹⁵² GG.net 78.47, 14.39. The *sŷr* ‘stars’ are unlikely to represent heraldic decoration: although a star or ‘mullet’ was a heraldic device, it was not found on Sir Rhys ap Tomas’s coat of arms

could perhaps refer to the metal parts of a buckler,¹⁵³ but (like *aestew*) is probably intended in a more general sense as praise of the shield's strength, and by extension that of its wielder. The wax shield ([*t*]arian *wêr*) in Guto's satire of Dafydd ab Edmwnd provides a deliberately absurd contrast to these tough heroic shields.¹⁵⁴

Shields were often used figuratively by the poets to represent patrons, conveying a strong idea of the person as a protector as well as more specific military connotations. Two of the examples in Guto's poems juxtapose the word *tarian* 'shield' with *tŵr* 'tower', taking advantage not only of the alliteration between these words but also of their contrasting meanings, with the word *tŵr* suggesting a patron's lofty status in society as well as his protective role.¹⁵⁵ In his poem to Sir William ap Thomas of Raglan, Guto at first appears to ask for the patron's shield ([*t*]arian) but then develops this into a metaphor for his patron's 'pure, merry heart'.¹⁵⁶ This passage goes on to compare the wearing of Sir William's 'markings' (*arwyddion*) to wearing the 'arms of my king' (*arfau 'mrenin*) and, although this clearly describes insignia worn on clothes,¹⁵⁷ there may remain some tenuous link with the idea of a shield as a means of displaying a heraldic device. Heraldry was a popular subject amongst poets of this period, most notably in the case of Lewys Glyn Cothi who, when writing down his poems, often included a drawing or painting of the arms of the relevant patron.¹⁵⁸

Bows and arrows

Whilst shields were dwindling in significance in late medieval praise poetry the reverse was true for archery, so it is no surprise that Guto, himself an archer, mentions bows and arrows quite often, with 25 references in 14 poems. He makes particularly effective and varied use of archery metaphors, most notably in his praise poem to Rhys ap Dafydd of Uwch Aeron in which the poet's tongue is represented as a bow (*bwa*) or 'the bow of song' (*bwa'r gerdd*), his breath as the bowstring (*llinyn*) and his patron as the target (*nod*):

which, instead, featured three ravens; see DWH II 498–9; cf. GG.net 14.34, 41 and 44. For the likening of the rivets of bucklers to stars, see Huws, *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch*, 176; cf. DG.net 161.61–4 where the reverse comparison occurs. Guto himself apparently refers to the rivets of a brigandine as stars in GG.net 98.48 *Dyblig o'r sirig a'r sêr* 'a covering made from the silk and the stars'; see further Day, 'The Imagery of the Brigandine'.

¹⁵³ Cf. GG.net 110.22 *chwyd ddur o fwcled* 'buckler which is a lattice of steel'.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. 67.23 *A'th darian wêr wrth deiraer* 'And your wax shield in three battles'.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. 12.61 *Un Duw gad, nid gwan, ein tŵr a'n tarian* 'May the one God keep our tower and shield, he is not weak'; ibid. 95.39–40 ... *a tharian a thŵr / Tref Oswallt tra fo oeswr* '... and shield and tower / of St Oswald's town while he lives'; cf. the alliteration of *tir* and *tarian* ibid. 48.21 *Ieuan oedd darian ei dir* 'Ieuan was a shield to his land'.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. 19.31–8.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. 19.39–42nn.

¹⁵⁸ DWH I 77–121, 179.

Seythydd wyf, od ymsaethaf
 Saethu nod yn syth a wnaif:
 Nid nod gwael, iawngael angerdd,
 Nod a gaiff enaid y gerdd.
 Arfer o fwa erfai
 Yr wyf er moliant i rai.
 Nid bwa hwn, cystlwn cur,
 Yw neu lwyf a wnâi lafur.
 Y tafawd, arawd eiriau,
 Yw bwa'r gerdd heb air gau,
 Arllwybr brig urddedig ddadl,
 A'r llinyn yw'r holl anadl.
 Saethu a wnaif, bennaf bill,
 Yr unnod lle ceir ynnill.

I am an archer, if I go shooting / I can shoot straight at a target: / this is no mean target, accurate skill, / but a target which the soul of song will hit. / I am using a magnificent bow / in order to praise some people. / This is not a bow made of yew or elm wood / which would be hard to draw, painful business. / The tongue with its eloquent words / is the bow of song without a false word, / path to the height of splendid discourse, / and the string is all the breath. / I will shoot always with the finest verse / at the same target where there is gain to be had.¹⁵⁹

Bearing in mind that this poem has been dated to the latter half of the 1430s, and that Guto took part in the Normandy expedition of 1441 (and perhaps also an earlier one in 1436) the poem's opening words would surely have teased the audience's expectations. They would have heard a professional archer boasting of his prowess – until, that is, Guto goes on to state very definitely that he is *not* using a real-life bow! He transforms from archer to poet in a few short lines.

This portrayal of Guto as an archer 'shooting' praise at a patron is also found, or alluded to, elsewhere in his works.¹⁶⁰ His praise poem for Siôn Edward of Plasnewydd and his wife, Gwenhwyfar, includes mention of a [b]wa gwawd 'bow of poetry' which represents Guto's own tongue or talents,

¹⁵⁹ GG.net 11.1–14. The word *saeth* 'arrow' does not occur in this poem but the related verb *saethu* is used to describe the 'shooting' of verses, and *ergyd* is used to denote metaphorical arrows or arrow-shots (see GPC s.v. *ergyd* 1(a)). Similar instances of *ergyd* or *saethu* (and also *seythydd* / *saethydd* 'archer') were not counted in the total of 25 references to bows and arrows given above, which includes only direct references to a *bwa* 'bow' or *saeth* 'arrow'.

¹⁶⁰ GG.net 12.20 *A thrannoeth saethu'r unnod* 'and to shoot at the same target the day after that' (in praise of Dafydd ap Tomas of Blaen-tren); *ibid.* 20.55–6 *Nid saethydd beunydd bennod / Y dyn ni wyl ond un nod* 'No marksman shooting daily at a target / is the man who sees only one target' (from a bardic dispute, in which Guto criticizes Hywel Dafi for constantly praising the same patron); *ibid.* 115.10 *A dwyn taith rhwng deunod teg* 'and go on a journey between the two fair targets' (in praise of Abbot Dafydd ab Owain of Strata Marcella).

and Guto uses the same words to honour his fellow poet in his elegy for Llywelyn ab y Moel, referring to him as *bwa gwawd Bowys* ‘Powys’s bow of poetry’.¹⁶¹

Related imagery, but working as it were in the opposite direction, is found in Guto’s poem in praise of Siancyn Havard of Brecon. Here Siancyn’s generosity is the bowstring and he himself is described as a bow of good yew:

Bywyd didranc yt, Siancyn,
Bwa o yw da wyd ynn,
A Duw a’th anelodd di
Â hoyw linyh haelioni.

*Life without fail to you, Siancyn, / you are a bow of good yew for us, /
and it is God who has drawn you / with the merry bowstring of
generosity.*¹⁶²

Elsewhere in the same poem Siancyn is described as *Brenin bwaau’r ynys* ‘king of the bows of this island’ and *bwa clod* ‘the bow of fame’, whilst his arrows or arrow-shots, denoted by the words *saeth* and *ergyd*, represent the gifts he bestows upon poets and other entertainers (his ‘targets’ or *nodau*).¹⁶³ It is likely that the *bwa’r glêr* mentioned in Guto’s poem answering a charge of flattery brought by Hywel Dafî also refers to the patron as a bow shooting rewards in return for the praise of poets.¹⁶⁴ Less clear is the significance of Guto’s reference to Huw Bulkeley as *Bwa mawr o’r Biwmares* ‘powerful [large] bow from Beaumaris’ in a request poem for a hawk.¹⁶⁵ It may be another allusion to a patron as a bow ‘shooting’ gifts, particularly bearing in mind that the audience may well have been familiar with Guto’s use of similar imagery in earlier poems, or it may be more comparable to the figurative use of spears, swords and shields to represent patrons,

¹⁶¹ Ibid. 107.31–2 *Ef a gaiff o fwa gwawd / F’ergydion tra fo’r geudawd* ‘he will receive from the bow of poetry / my shots as long as my heart endures’; *ibid.* 82.24.

¹⁶² Ibid. 31.39–42.

¹⁶³ Ibid. 31.60, 62 and 45–54 *Saethu ydd wyd, blymlwyd blanc, / Aur newydd er yn ieuanc. / Byriaist i bob rhyw burawr / Aur gyda medd, ergyd mawr. / Y saethau aur a saethych / Yw rhoddion y gweision gwyh; / Dy nodau dianwadal – / Dy feirdd teg ar dy fwrdd tal. / Hwyr y ceisiwn (hir cyswllt) / O’th law saeth na thalai swllt* ‘You’ve been shooting, O battle-supporter, / fresh gold ever since you were young. / You’ve shot gold with mead – a mighty blow – / at every kind of entertainer. / The golden arrows which you shoot / are the gifts of your magnificent servants; / your unwavering targets / are your fair poets at your high table. / We’re hardly likely to look (long-lasting is the relationship) / for an arrow from your hand that’s worth less than a shilling.’

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. 18.25–6 *Prisio Morgan ap Rhosier / Y bu ar glod, bwa’r glêr* ‘he has evaluated Morgan ap Roger, / bow of the bards, in praise-poetry’. Although *bwa’r glêr* could refer to Hywel Dafî himself, this is less likely in view of the fact that such imagery is generally positive in Guto’s poems, *ibid.* 26n.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 60.14.

suggesting (far-reaching?) power and strength.¹⁶⁶ It is also possible, given the wider context of the poem, that Guto means to suggest that Huw is skilled at hunting with a bow and even, perhaps, that he is strong enough to bend a large, powerful bow, although *mawr* could just refer to Huw’s own qualities.

A different type of comparison of a patron to a bow is found in Guto’s poem in praise of Wiliam Fychan ap Gwilym of Penrhyn:

Nid ystwyth bwa, llwyth llaw,
Nid estyn yn ei dastiaw;
Ni thynnir o’r gwir ar gam,
Nid anela dyn Wiliam.

*A bow isn’t pliable, load in hand, / it doesn’t expand when tested; / Wiliam cannot be wrongfully drawn from the truth, / a man cannot bend him.*¹⁶⁷

The first two lines of this passage refer to the great force required to draw a powerful longbow, which would have been familiar to Guto from his own experience, whilst Wiliam’s own resistance to ‘bending’ in the second two conveys his unswerving adherence to the truth.¹⁶⁸ A further reference to the difficulty of drawing a bow (of yew or elm) is found amongst the metaphorical archery references in Guto’s ‘bow of song’ poem to Rhys ap Dafydd of Uwch Aeron.¹⁶⁹ Guto’s experience of archery may also have contributed to his comparison of Siancyn Havard to a bow of good yew drawn by God,¹⁷⁰ as opposed to other, less generous patrons who are like a bow of unseasoned yew, liable to break:

Mal bwa (aml y’i beir)
O frig yw afrywiog ir:
Tynner dros hanner y saeth,
Torri yw ei naturiaeth.

*like a bow (much-criticized) / from the branches of a fresh, unsuitable yew: / I just draw the arrow back more than half its length, / and it [sc. the bow] is bound by nature to break.*¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ Cf. GDID VII.72 *Bwa Deheubarth* ‘the bow of Deheubarth’; GLGC 112.111 *bwa yw a roed drwy holl Brydyn* ‘he is a bow that was deployed through all of Britain’; GDEp 9.33 *Bwa yw’r mab i wŷr Môn* ‘the lad is a bow for the men of Anglesey’.

¹⁶⁷ GG.net 56.53–6.

¹⁶⁸ See *ibid.*nn (and background note).

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 11.7–8, quoted above. Although yew was the best and most widely used wood for medieval longbows, the use of elm was noted by Gerald of Wales in the twelfth century and some bows continued to be made of elm as late as the sixteenth, see J.F. Dimock (ed.), *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera* (8 vols., London, 1868), VI, 54 (*Itinerarium Kambriae*, I, 4); Strickland and Hardy, *Great Warbow*, 43–4.

¹⁷⁰ GG.net 31.39–42, quoted above.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* 31.35–8. Strickland and Hardy, *Great Warbow*, 24–5, note the difficulty of obtaining

Even so, a poet did not need to have first-hand experience of *battlefield* archery in order to come up with such imagery. A similar passage is found in a poem by Dafydd ap Gwilym:

Y bwa yw ni bo iach,
Rhier dau hanner haeach,
I gyfranc, ddidranc ddodrefn,
Ag aur y lliwir ei gefn;
Ac er mawrwerth y gwerthir
Y bwa hwn, gwn mae gwir.
Ni thebygir, gwir gofiad,
Mewn peth teg fod breg na brad.

*The yew bow that is in no condition / (consider it as nearly in two halves) / for battle, weapon that will not slay, / its back is coloured in gold; / and this bow is sold for a high price – / I know full well. / No one suspects, that's the truth, / that there could be fault or treachery in something beautiful.*¹⁷²

Although Dafydd's imagery, like Guto's, is metaphorical – in this case describing a woman who uses art to conceal her lack of natural beauty – it has a foundation in reality, since there is evidence that some form of painting was indeed used on bows, and that it might sometimes disguise their poor quality.¹⁷³

This is not the only point of similarity between Dafydd's poems and Guto's as regards archery – indeed, both poets seem to have been particularly fond of this type of imagery. Unsurprisingly, most of Dafydd's metaphorical arrows are in love poems, but his poem 'Basaleg' contains lines which may readily be compared to Guto's references to 'shooting' praise at a patron:

Pand digrif yng ngŵydd nifer
Caru, claernod saethu, clêr?

*Is it not agreeable before a host / to love poets who shoot at a clear target?*¹⁷⁴

Both Guto and Dafydd use the expression *saethu'r sêr* 'shooting at the stars' to convey futility,¹⁷⁵ and both poets use archery imagery for the purposes of satire. In his bardic debate with Gruffudd Gryg, Dafydd responds to

good-quality bowstaves in the fifteenth century.

¹⁷² DG.net 138.17–24.

¹⁷³ Strickland and Hardy, *Great Warbow*, 23; R. Wadge, *Arrowstorm* (Stroud, 2007), 188.

¹⁷⁴ DG.net 14.21–2.

¹⁷⁵ GG.net 2.57–8 *Iesu nef, o'r sôn ofer / A fu megis saethu sêr!* 'Jesus of heaven, what a lot of pointless talk / which was like shooting at the stars!'; DG.net 144.33–4 *Gwydn wyf, bwrw gwawd yn ofer, / Gwaeth no bwrw â saeth y sêr* 'I'm persistent, shooting song in vain, / which is worse than shooting an arrow at the stars'; cf. also GHS 20.43–4 *Holl feddiant Alecsander / A fu megis saethu sêr* 'All the might of Alexander / was [as futile] as shooting at the stars.'

Gruffudd’s satire by describing him as a bow (*bwa crefft*) and a crossbow (*arblastr*) which shoots ‘every target’ (*pob nod*) but barely strikes a single one.¹⁷⁶ Guto, by contrast, represents his own poems or *cywyddau* as arrows in a satire depicting Dafydd ab Edmwnd as a small animal or bird hunted across Wales by Guto and their fellow poets.¹⁷⁷ Another satire by Guto describes the marks of arrows on Dafydd ab Edmwnd and an enemy archer’s aim in his direction, amongst the general derision of Dafydd’s lack of military prowess.¹⁷⁸

Unlike Guto’r Glyn, Dafydd ap Gwilym refers directly to his own experience of archery in the real world, mentioning ‘shooting at stags’, amongst other aspects of the lifestyle which he shares (or claims to share) with his patron Ifor Hael.¹⁷⁹ Indeed, archery seems to have been a fairly widespread pastime amongst poets and patrons alike. Rhys ap Cynfrig Coch and Ieuan ap Rhydderch each boasted of their prowess in shooting at targets (*parselau*), amongst other feats, whilst in Rhys Goch Eryri’s poem to ask for a hunting knife he introduces his request by stating that he already has two of the prerequisites for the chase, namely a bow and a hound.¹⁸⁰ A bow is the subject of various other poems of request and thanks,¹⁸¹ and also finds mention in Guto’s poem to request a hunting horn from Sieffrai Cyffin on behalf of Siôn Eutun. Here, as was the case with Rhys Goch Eryri’s poem, Guto uses the bow to illustrate the ‘gap’ in his patron’s equipment which needs to be filled by the item he is requesting, and in the same poem he also uses a bow as a metaphor to convey the curved shape of the horn.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁶ DG.net 30.1–8.

¹⁷⁷ See GG.net poem 66, and especially lines 15–18 *Gollyngais a saethais i / Ddoe i Ddacyn ddeuddeci: / Â saith gywydd y saethwyd, / Ac yno y llas y gown llwyd* ‘I let loose twelve hounds yesterday after Dacyn, / and I fired shots: / he was shot by seven *cywyddau*, / and the grey gown was killed there.’

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. 67.15–16 *Ôl saethau ergydiau’r gad / A thyllau sy i’th ddillad* ‘There are marks of arrows from the blows of battle / and holes in your clothes’; ibid. 67.35–6 *Ni chenfydd saethydd sy hwnt / Dy omach, Deio Iemwnt* ‘An archer yonder cannot see / your leg, Deio Edmwnd’; cf. Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr’s description of Casnodyn, also in a satirical poem, as *cytbar saeth esgar* ‘companion of an enemy arrow’, GGD 13.29.

¹⁷⁹ DG.net 14.37 *A saethu rhygeirw sythynt* ‘and shoot at splendid, straight-running stags’. Dafydd also chose to portray himself hunting with a bow in one of his ‘misadventure’ poems, where his attempt to shoot a fox results in his bow breaking, ibid. 60.13–22.

¹⁸⁰ D. Johnston, ‘Cywydd gan Ddisgybl Iolo Goch?’, YB XVIII (1992), 100–9 (106, line 19); GIRh 3.115–6; GRhGE 5.9–10.

¹⁸¹ Huws, *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch*, 231–8, notes that bows were the subject of eight such poems between c.1350 and c.1500, and Lewys Glyn Cothi, Maredudd ap Rhys, Tomos Derllys, Tudur Aled and Tudur Penllyn all requested, or offered thanks for, a bow for their own use. A bow is also the subject of a request poem by Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur dating from c.1300, see GGD 2.

¹⁸² GG.net 99.25–6 *Nid onest pen fforestwr / Heb gorn gyda bwa gŵr* ‘A forester’s honourable mouth isn’t so / without a horn to go with a man’s bow’ and 41 *Bwa genau’n bugunad* ‘a

Saethu ‘shooting’ is included amongst the 24 feats or *campau* listed in manuscripts dating from the sixteenth century onwards, and recorded in John Davies’s *Dictionarium Duplex* of 1632.¹⁸³ *Saethu* is placed in the subcategory of *pedair gwrolgamp o rym arfau* ‘four manly feats by strength of weapons’, along with *chwarae cleddau a bwled* ‘sword and buckler play’, *chwarae cleddau deuddwrn* ‘two-handed sword play’ and *chwarae ffon ddwybig* ‘quarterstaff play’. Though Lewys Glyn Cothi may have been the first to mention the idea of a particular 24 feats, varying numbers and types of physical and cultural feats are mentioned by poets from the late fourteenth century onwards.¹⁸⁴ Henry Griffith of Newcourt, according to Guto’s elegy, was skilled at several feats including archery:

Ni thrwsiodd maen na throsol,
Ni bu neb na bai’n ei ôl.
Saeth fawr a saethai f’eryr,
Saethu ’mlaen seithmil o wŷr.
Nid âi i’w naid un dyn iach,
Nid oedd ieithydd du ddoethach.

*No-one handled stone nor bar, / there was no-one who was not inferior to him. / My eagle used to shoot a great arrow, / shooting further than seven thousand men. / No fit man could match his leap, / never was there a more learned dark-haired master of tongues.*¹⁸⁵

The ability to shoot a long way would have been a reflection of Henry’s strength and thus directly comparable with his ability to lift or throw heavy objects. The mention of a ‘great arrow’ may suggest that he used a particularly large and powerful bow, since bow and arrow would need to be in proportion.¹⁸⁶ If so, this may have been a longbow of the type used in battle, as opposed to the smaller, lighter bows which were often favoured by the gentry as being more convenient for hunting.¹⁸⁷ Henry Griffith would no doubt have become familiar with such weapons during the course of his military service, but it is unlikely that he would have used a bow in battle,

mouth’s bow bellowing’; cf. also the figurative reference to Huw Bulkeley as a *bwa* in Guto’s poem to request a hawk, mentioned above (ibid. 60.14).

¹⁸³ The earliest complete listing appears to be that in Pen 56, dating from the first half of the sixteenth century, see RepWM.

¹⁸⁴ GPC s.v. *camp* (y *Pedair C. ar Hugain*); GLGC 50.19–20; and see, for example, Johnston, ‘Cywydd gan Ddisgybl Iolo Goch?’, 106, lines 11–28; GIRh 3.111–22; GLGC 50.19–38; GRhGE 12.15–36.

¹⁸⁵ GG.net 36.43–8; Henry Griffith’s prowess in shooting a bow and throwing a stone was also mentioned in Guto’s poem in praise of his black hair (ibid. 33.39–46, quoted in the conclusions section below, where Guto’s own aptitude for feats of strength is discussed). Further references to such feats are noted in 244 and 266nn below.

¹⁸⁶ Strickland and Hardy, *Great Warbow*, 26. Cf. the figurative reference to Huw Bulkeley as a *bwa mawr* (GG.net 60.14), discussed above.

¹⁸⁷ Strickland and Hardy, *Great Warbow*, 38.

except perhaps under exceptional circumstances.¹⁸⁸ Poetic praise of a patron’s skill at archery, in itself, is unlikely to have suggested any military connotations to the contemporary audience. Even an abbot could excel at this feat according to two poems by Gutun Owain in praise of Dafydd, abbot of Valle Crucis, one of which specifically mentions how few other men could bend his bow.¹⁸⁹

Although by Guto’s day the ranks of professional archers included fairly prosperous men who might be yeomen or even minor gentry, for the most part they remained relatively low-status soldiers as compared with the men-at-arms who fought alongside them.¹⁹⁰ Guto demonstrates his own consciousness of such distinctions in his poem ‘The battle of the bards with the wine of Thomas ap Watkin of Llanddewi Rhydderch’. Here the wine and other drinks represent the French army and its leaders who, in a kind of rehearsal for the real-life fighting to come, are to be defeated by the valiant efforts of Guto and his fellow poets and reciters, captained by Thomas himself.¹⁹¹ Significantly, and perhaps surprisingly, the poets appear in the guise of men-at-arms whilst the archers are represented by the reciters, men who played a secondary role in reciting a poet’s works in his absence:

Saethyddion rhwyddion yn rhaid
Yt, gannwr o ddatgeiniad.
Y rhain ni chilian’ yrhawg,
A’r eurfeirdd yn wŷr arfawg.

*Archers swift in battle you have: / a hundred reciters. / These will never flee, / and the brilliant poets are the men-at-arms.*¹⁹²

The attitudes expressed in this poem are all the more remarkable in light of the possibility that Thomas ap Watkin may himself have served as an archer not long after it was composed, if he is the same *Thomas Watkins* whose name appears in the muster roll for the duke of York’s expedition of 1441.¹⁹³ As Barry J. Lewis notes, it is surprising to find an archer amongst Guto’s patrons, and if Thomas ap Watkin did indeed serve in this capacity

¹⁸⁸ Chapman, 7 above, notes that there is no evidence that Henry Griffith ever served as an archer in war.

¹⁸⁹ GO poems XXIV (especially lines 33–4 ‘*Oes wyth o’r bobl a saetho / A blyka i vwa yvo?*’ ‘Are there eight people who shoot / who can bend his bow?’) and XXVIII. Cf. also Lewys Glyn Cothi’s boasting that he would draw to behind his ear a bow which no other man could draw as far as his face, GLGC 211.17–20.

¹⁹⁰ See Ayton, ‘English Armies in the Fourteenth Century’, 33; Curry, ‘English Armies in the Fifteenth Century’, 46; W.M. Ormrod, ‘The Domestic Response to the Hundred Years War’, Curry and Hughes (eds.), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications*, 83–102; Hardy, *Longbow*, 76–9.

¹⁹¹ GG.net poem 4 (background note), and for the role of reciters, see Johnston, *Llên yr Uchelwyr*, 39–40.

¹⁹² GG.net 4.39–42.

¹⁹³ See *ibid.* 4.42n and the patron note for Thomas ap Watkin.

it is likely that he was a young man at the time.¹⁹⁴ If so, perhaps he was on sufficiently friendly terms with the young poet to allow a certain amount of leg-pulling. It is worth noting, in any case, that the only weapon directly associated with Thomas in this poem is a spear ([g]wayw).¹⁹⁵

Professional archers, Guto's one-time comrades in arms, are no better represented in his other works, and indeed the use of archery against human beings most often appears in negative contexts. In his poem addressed to the Rood in Chester, seeking a cure for Dafydd ab Ieuan, it is an arrow that has caused his patron's grave wound, its head remaining embedded in his thigh.¹⁹⁶ We are not told whether Dafydd was wounded in battle or was the victim of some other kind of incident. The use of bows whilst hunting sometimes led to accidents, and they were also used for ambushes and assassinations. Indeed, the murder of Watgyn Fychan of Brodorddyn with a bow and arrow in 1456 is described bitterly in an elegy by Hywel Swardwal (or, perhaps, his son Ieuan).¹⁹⁷ This poem makes it very clear that it was an Englishman who was responsible, and English archery also appears, as a more generalized threat, in Guto's poem to request a brigandine on behalf of Dafydd Llwyd of Abertanad. His description of this iron-reinforced garment as *Pais rhag gwayw Sais a'i saeth* 'a tunic against an Englishman's spear and arrow' may be compared to a couplet by Ieuan Llwyd Brydydd, *Nid rhaid yt ofal malais, / Na phen saeth, na ffonwayw Sais* 'You need have no anxiety over malice, / nor an arrow's head, nor an Englishman's spear'.¹⁹⁸ This second example also refers to the effectiveness of protective clothing, but here the 'doublet' (*dwbled*) of Hywel ab Einion is afforded additional significance as a symbol of the divine protection that helped him to survive the battle of Edgecote (or Banbury).¹⁹⁹

Throughout the Wars of the Roses the use of large numbers of longbow men on both sides led to a terrible loss of life but Edgecote was regarded in Wales as a particular disaster, being marked not only by large numbers of Welsh casualties but also by the capture and execution of William Herbert, first earl of Pembroke.²⁰⁰ It seems that in this particular battle there were more archers on the earl of Warwick's side than on Herbert's, so it is little wonder that Hywel Swardwal's elegy for Herbert opens with the wish that no

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. Ayton, 'English Armies in the Fourteenth Century', 33, notes that a man might serve both as an archer and a man-at-arms in the course of his career, 'perhaps as a consequence of a change of fortune', and Curry, 'Guns and Goddams', 180–1, notes that even 'men of status' might begin their careers as archers.

¹⁹⁵ GG.net 4.4.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. poem 69.

¹⁹⁷ See GHS poem 23 (and background note).

¹⁹⁸ GG.net 98.40; GILIF 7.55–6.

¹⁹⁹ See *ibid.* 115–16 and for similar symbolism, see above, 23n.

²⁰⁰ H.T. Evans, *Wales and the Wars of the Roses* (1915; second ed. Stroud, 1995), 94–110; Hardy, *Longbow*, 125–8; Lewis, 'The Battle of Edgecote or Banbury (1469) through the Eyes of Contemporary Welsh Poets', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 9 (2011), 97–117.

owner of a bow in Yorkshire should have a good night’s sleep.²⁰¹ Guto also composed an elegy for this man who had been the most powerful Welsh nobleman of his age, towards the end of which is found a despairing expression of the helplessness of the Wales he has left behind, in which there can be no further defence against the ‘arrow-play’ (*ymsaethu*) of enemies.²⁰²

It seems, then, that Guto’r Glyn was very much aware that the destructive power of the longbow could be turned against the interests of his own countrymen and patrons, and the same was clearly true of Hywel Swrdwal, who may also have served as an archer in Normandy.²⁰³ Negative attitudes towards the use of bows in battle had been widespread throughout the Middle Ages and were not restricted to Wales – this was, after all, a weapon that could kill effectively from a distance and perhaps from a position of concealment, and one which allowed a humble man to injure or kill more expensively equipped soldiers of far higher social status.²⁰⁴ Perhaps, then, it is not altogether surprising that Guto’r Glyn, a poet who devoted his muse chiefly to the praise of the gentry, should have chosen to portray himself as an archer whose arrows were safely metaphorical.

Guns

By Guto’s day the dominance of archery in warfare had begun to face a serious challenge in the form of increasingly reliable and effective gunpowder artillery.²⁰⁵ In poetry, too, these new weapons became increasingly prominent during the fifteenth century, generally being denoted by the loanword *gwn*, from the Middle English *gunne*, *gonne* ‘gun’.²⁰⁶ Up until the last decade of the fifteenth century the English word seems to have been associated mainly with ‘great guns’ or cannon, with the specific form *handgone* or *handgunne* ‘handgun’ being used to denote smaller, more portable gunpowder weapons.²⁰⁷ It is likely that the early examples of *gwn*

²⁰¹ GHS 7.1–2 *Ni bo i berchen bwa / Racw’n swydd Iorc unnos dda* ‘May no owner of a bow / over in Yorkshire have a good night[’s sleep]’. Many of Warwick’s followers came from Yorkshire (ibid.n).

²⁰² GG.net 24.73–8.

²⁰³ Chapman, 17 above (I thank Dr Adam Chapman for providing me with additional details of the contemporary records). Hywel does not refer to himself as an archer in his poems, not even in a metaphorical context.

²⁰⁴ A.T. Hatto, ‘Archery and Chivalry: A Noble Prejudice’, *The Modern Language Review*, 35 (1940), 40–54.

²⁰⁵ DeVries and Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, chapter 5; Rogers, ‘Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years’ War’, 258–72.

²⁰⁶ GPC s.v. *gwn*!; for a discussion of the depiction of guns in Welsh poetry from the fourteenth century onwards, see D.F. Evans, ‘“Y carl a’i trawai o’r cudd”: Ergyd y Gwn ar y Cywyddwyr’, *Dwned*, 4 (1998), 75–105.

²⁰⁷ OED Online s.v. *gun*, n., I.1.a and 3 (the earliest cited example of *gun* with the meaning ‘portable firearm’ dates from 1495).

in Welsh also denote cannon, including those in Guto's poems.²⁰⁸ Guto's use of the term *maen gwn*, literally 'gun stone', confirms this idea, since although stone balls were the main ammunition used for cannon at this time, lead balls were typically used for handguns.²⁰⁹ A further instance where the *gwn* must clearly be a 'great gun' occurs in Llywelyn ap Gutun's satire, based around the idea that Guto has drowned:

Llyna gael, nid llai no gwn,
Llun pencerdd yn llawn pencwn.

*there's to be found a pencerdd's form / full of cod, not smaller than a gun.*²¹⁰

A more respectful artillery-based comparison is found in the elegy sung for Guto by Gutun Owain, where Guto's praise poetry is compared to 'a blow from the bore of a gun' ([*d]yrnod o geudod gwn*).²¹¹ This represents an interesting contrast with Guto's own use of arrows in a similar metaphorical context. Gutun would no doubt have been aware of this and indeed may have chosen the gun quite deliberately, either for the simple reason that it was different from Guto's own metaphor or because he regarded the gun as a still more potent symbol of the forcefulness of Guto's verses. Guto himself says, in a poem seeking reconciliation with Ieuan Fychan ab Ieuan of Pengwern, that Ieuan's nature is like that of a gun (*anian gwn*) – suggesting, perhaps, an 'explosive' temper! – and elsewhere praises Sir John Burgh as a 'powerful cannonball in the heat of battle' (*Maen gwn traws mewn genau trin*).²¹² Another memorable comparison is found in his poem in praise of Matthew Gough of Maelor, whose soldiers are described as *Main gwns tir Maen ac Aensio* 'cannonballs of the lands of Maine and Anjou'.²¹³

No doubt these comparisons were intended to evoke the impressive power and devastating effects of artillery, and indeed Gutun Owain went so far as to describe one of his patrons as being 'as fearsome as a cannonball'.²¹⁴ The significance of the artillery is less clear in the case of a couplet from Guto's poem in praise of Sir Roger Kynaston of Knockin, *Ar odde canu'r oeddw'n / A gado gwŷr ergyd gwn* 'I was intending to sing / and to

²⁰⁸ By the sixteenth century, by contrast, poets were using the word *gwn* for the handguns that had, by this time, become fairly commonplace items. In request poems by Siôn Tudur and Wiliam Llŷn, for example, use of the *gwn* for hunting birds is mentioned, see GST poem 48; J.C. Morrice (ed.), *Barddoniaeth Wiliam Llŷn* (Bangor, 1908), poem LIX. See further Evans, '“Y carl a'i trawai o'r cudd”', 97; Huws, *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch*, 76–7, 232, 234, 238.

²⁰⁹ DeVries and Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, 153–4; GPC s.v. *maen*¹ (*m. gwn*); OED Online s.v. *gunstone*; see also Chapman, 16 above.

²¹⁰ GG.net 65a.27–8.

²¹¹ Ibid. 126.12.

²¹² Ibid. 106.13, 80.28.

²¹³ Ibid. 3.36.

²¹⁴ GO X.20 *Ag vn ofn â maen gwnn wyd*; see also Evans, '“Y carl a'i trawai o'r cudd”', 80.

leave the gunshot warriors’.²¹⁵ Here the *gwŷr ergyd gwn* may be either warriors of the nature of a gunshot or men who are accustomed to shoot guns, or indeed a double meaning is perfectly possible. Guto himself probably experienced cannon-fire at first hand during his military service in France, and indeed his praise of Matthew Gough is thought to date from that time in his career, along with his ‘battle with the wine’ poem in which cannonballs also appear. Here, though, they are the ‘cannonballs of song’, used by the poets to attack the wine.²¹⁶

Whilst discussing these and other poetic references to guns, Dylan Foster Evans noted that most are indirect or metaphorical, and there is only rarely any suggestion that the patron has any direct connection with such weapons.²¹⁷ This no doubt relates in part to the fact that although some patrons may well have had guns under their command – Henry Griffith, for example, served as Master of the Ordnance Company between 1441 and 1445 – the men who actually maintained and operated the guns were not of sufficient status to excite the poets’ interest.²¹⁸ A further consideration is that the use of any kind of artillery entailed striking at the enemy from a distance. Guns, therefore, like bows, could not readily be used by poets to convey praise of the heroic or chivalric attributes traditionally associated with fighting with swords or spears.²¹⁹

Knives, staves and axes

There remain a few types of weapons that are mentioned only rarely in Guto’s poems, namely knives, staves and axes. The best description of a knife in Guto’s works is, predictably, found in a request poem.²²⁰ Though the item requested (from Gruffudd ap Rhys of Yale on behalf of Siôn Hanmer of Halghton and Llai) is a hunting knife rather than a weapon of war, the poem remains of interest to this discussion because of its detailed *dyfalu* description and the variety of terms used for the knife. These include *arf* ‘weapon’, [*b*] *aslart* (< English *baselard(e)*), *cyllell geirw* ‘deer knife’, *llafn* ‘blade’, *durllif* ‘steel blade’, [*g*] *waetgnaif* ‘blood-knife’, *wtgnaiff* (< English *wood-knife*), *sgïen* ‘knife, small sword’, and even *llath* ‘rod, spear’, this latter term being used as a metaphor, perhaps to emphasize the length of the blade.²²¹ Guto refers elsewhere to the knife’s length,²²² and also to its

²¹⁵ GG.net 79.59–60.

²¹⁶ Ibid. 4.55–6 *Cydsaethu, iawngu angerdd, / Gwin coch â main gynnu cerdd* ‘shooting all together, truly affectionate ferocity, / red wine with the cannonballs of song’.

²¹⁷ Evans, ‘“Y carl a’i trawai o’r cudd”’, 83.

²¹⁸ See Chapman, 9–17 above; cf. the earlier poets’ scant references to mechanical siege engines, see Day, ‘Arfau’, 176, 347.

²¹⁹ See further Evans, ‘“Y carl a’i trawai o’r cudd”’, 88–93; Chapman, 10–11 and 15–16 above.

²²⁰ GG.net poem 76.

²²¹ Ibid. 76.30, 33 and 57 (*arf*), 74 ([*b*] *aslart*), 41 (*cyllell geirw*), 49 (*llafn*, also in 69, *trillafn*), 64

curvature:

Tenau 'n ei chorff, tew 'n ei chil,
A'i gogwydd ar ei gwegil,
Yn grom iawn, yn grymanaid,dd,
Yn blyg fal ewin y blaidd.

*thin in the body, fat at the back, / with a slope at its nape, / very curved
like a reaping hook, / bent like a wolf's claw.*²²³

This passage suggests a blade that was curved and, perhaps, also had a distinct angle on its back, a feature often seen on single-edged knives.²²⁴ It seems that the hilt had a grip made of horn (*corn*),²²⁵ and a further feature of interest is hinted at by Guto's reference to the knife as an *ysgell groesgam* 'a pointed blade like a bent cross [thistle with a bent cross]', which suggests that it may have had a curved or asymmetric cross guard.²²⁶ Mention is also made of the knife's scabbard (*gwain*), and the poet refers several times to two additional, smaller knives carried in the scabbard, envisioning the main knife as being pregnant and the other two as 'daughters' or 'shoots' and even going so far as to praise them as a 'Trinity'.²²⁷ Such auxiliary knives were carried in the scabbards of various types of daggers, knives and even swords and were often used for eating, although in the case of hunting sets such as the one in Guto's poem the main purpose was to provide a range of differently sized blades to be used at the various stages of butchering the

(*durllif*), 37 ([g]waetgnaif and wtgnaiff), 39 ('sgien), and 31 (*llath*); see also GPC s.vv. For *llath* and (y)sgien, see 31 and 133nn above, and for *baslart* and *wtgnaiff*, see Blackmore, *Hunting Weapons*, 12–14, 56–66. The term *bidog gam* 'bent dagger' is used in the poem's title in some manuscripts, see GG.net poem 76 (background note). The word *als* in line 28 may also refer in some way to the knife, but its meaning is very uncertain (ibid.n).

²²² GG.net 76.35 and 52–4.

²²³ Ibid. 76.45–8. GPC s.v. *cil* notes several meanings including 'corner, angle, back, nape of the neck' and 'back of an edged tool'; cf. ibid. s.v. *gwegil* 'nape of the neck, noddle; back; transf. back of a single-edged weapon or tool'. GG.net 76.45 apparently refers to the fact that the back of a single-edged knife would, obviously, be thicker than its cutting edge – indeed, this knife is described elsewhere (lines 51–2) as being used to cut up a stag's carcass on a chopping block, and so may well have had a particularly 'fat' and heavy back, like a butcher's cleaver.

²²⁴ GPC s.v. *gogwydd* 'decline, deviation; a bowing or bending down, a stooping, curvature; (gradual) descent or fall, declivity, dip, downward slope or trend'. An angled back was a common feature of the scramasax, regarded as the ancestor of medieval hunting knives and falchions, and knives with similar angled backs were still being made in England as late as the fifteenth century, see Blackmore, *Hunting Weapons*, 12, 50–1; J. Cowgill et al. *Knives and Scabbards* (London, 2000), nos. 86–7.

²²⁵ GG.net 76.60 *Dur a chorn fal y drych yw* '[it is] made of steel and horn polished like a mirror'.

²²⁶ Ibid. 76.41. Cf. Blackmore, *Hunting Weapons*, 12–13, 52 and plates 10–12; and Guto's mention of the [c]roes 'cross guard' of his sword in GG.net 110.50.

²²⁷ The scabbard is mentioned in GG.net 76.61 and 71 and the 'daughter' knives ibid. 76.41–2 and 61–74.

animal.²²⁸

The role of knives in warfare may be hinted at by a reference to Sir Rhys ap Tomas of Abermarlais as *dagr y drin* ‘dagger of battle’ in a praise poem attributed to Guto.²²⁹ As noted above, similar figurative use of weapons such as swords, spears and shields had long been a common feature of Welsh poetry, but to use a word for a dagger or any other type of knife in this way seems to have been a relatively recent innovation. The earliest comparable example is the epithet *dager Gwynedd* ‘dagger of Gwynedd’ in an elegy by Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen to Goronwy ap Tudur of Benmynydd, who died in 1382.²³⁰ And indeed, the earliest clear reference in praise poetry to knives being wielded by a poet’s patron is Prydydd Breuan’s mention of the *gwaedliw gyllyll* ‘bloodstained knives’ of one Maredudd of Ynys Derllys in a poem dating, perhaps, from around the second quarter of the fourteenth century.²³¹ This late arrival of knives into the vocabulary of praise poetry probably reflects the greater importance of various new types of dagger in the armaments of high-status fighting men from the late thirteenth century onwards,²³² although a loosening of the conventions which had held sway during the time of the Poets of the Princes may also have played its part. Even in this later period, though, knives and daggers are not well represented in praise poetry, perhaps reflecting their lingering associations with low-status infantry soldiers and their frequent use to dispatch higher-status combatants who had been unhorsed.²³³

Another decidedly unheroic aspect of knives was their association with treachery and crime. As readily concealed items which were, in any case, carried by almost everyone, knives were a favoured weapon of robbers and assassins. Dafydd ap Gwilym, for example, refers to the [*c*]yllell *faelereg* ‘hired knife’ that killed his uncle Llywelyn.²³⁴ The legendary ‘Treachery of the Long Knives’, a story which would have been well known in late medieval Wales thanks to its inclusion in Welsh versions of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *‘Historia Regum Britanniae’*, helped sustain the bad reputation of knives and added an extra dimension by associating them

²²⁸ M. de Neergaard, ‘The Use of Knives, Shears, Scissors and Scabbards’, J. Cowgill et al. *Knives and Scabbards*, 55; *ibid.* nos. 403, 414, 417, 418, 432, 464, 491; Blackmore, *Hunting Weapons*, 13–14, 51–9; H.L. Peterson, *Daggers and Fighting Knives of the Western World from the Stone Age until 1900* (New York, 1968), 29, 31, 34–5, 43.

²²⁹ GG.net 14.31.

²³⁰ GLIG 5.96. Cf. the figurative reference to Arthur’s knife Carnwennan in GHS 1.43 and the satirical use of knife metaphors in a series of *englynion* of uncertain authorship in which Rhys Grythor is described as a *bidog eb wain* ‘dagger without a sheath’ and a [*c*]yllell *geillio* ‘testicled knife’ (GG.net 122.13 and 15). The latter reference may suggest that the poet was familiar with contemporary ‘ballock daggers’, see Peterson, *Daggers and Fighting Knives*, 27–9.

²³¹ GPB 3–4; *ibid.* 1.6.

²³² Peterson, *Daggers and Fighting Knives*, 12–35.

²³³ DeVries, *Medieval Military Technology*, 19.

²³⁴ DG.net 6.82.

specifically with English perfidy.²³⁵ Guto himself refers to this story in his poem ‘To urge William Herbert, second earl of Pembroke, to avenge his father’, comparing the executions of the first earl and of Sir Roger Vaughan to this earlier Saxon treachery.²³⁶

A more specific reference to a knife as an instrument of English oppression is found in Guto’s poem ‘In praise of the silver hand of Siôn Dafî’, where a *pwynied* (< English ‘poniard’, a small, slim dagger) is mentioned as being the weapon which severed the subject’s hand as punishment for striking an Englishman.²³⁷ Another form of the same word, *pwyniart*, occurs (along with *dagr*) in a series of *englynion* of uncertain authorship concerning a dagger given to Hywel Grythor by the poet Tudur Aled.²³⁸ Here the dagger is depicted as being a worthy weapon in the hands of brave men, including three other poets, Guto’s Glyn amongst them, but in the last *englyn* Hywel is derided because he only ‘kills’ food and drink.

In a poem by Dafydd Epynt, both daggers (*deigr*) and a *ffon* ‘staff’ seem to be used to symbolize troubled times, perhaps suggesting the role of these weapons in conflict away from the field of battle.²³⁹ The word *ffon* had a range of meanings: it could mean ‘staff’, or ‘spear’ (as noted above), but Guto also used it to denote a bishop’s crosier and the ‘ragged staff’ emblem of the earl of Warwick.²⁴⁰ The meaning ‘staff’ (or ‘stick’) seems particularly appropriate where the *ffon* is apparently used to punish wrongdoers rather than to fight armed opponents, as in Guto’s description of Sir John Burgh of Wattlesborough ‘questioning a knave and dispatching him with a stick’ (*Holi ffals a’i hely â ffon*), and likewise in a couplet praising Sir William Herbert (later first earl of Pembroke): *A phoen herwyr, ffyn hirion; / I’r rhai ffeils rhôl warae â ffon* ‘and the pains of outlaws, long rods [/staves]; / he would give the false some stick-play’.²⁴¹ Such lines should probably not be interpreted literally, however, but rather as a symbolic expression of the

²³⁵ See the summary and reference in GG.net 25.3n, and for the earlier origins of the story, see the references given in Day, ‘Arfau’, 138 n. 565.

²³⁶ GG.net 25.3–4 *Lle bu wledd cyllyll a bwyd, / Llu’r wledd i’r llawr a laddwyd* ‘Where there was a feast of knives and food, / the crowd at the feast were hewn down to the ground.’ Cf. GLGC 104.24n; GDGor 4.74n.

²³⁷ See GPC s.v. *pwynied*, *pwynied*, *pwyniad*; OED Online s.v. *poniard*, n.; GG.net 41.23–4 *Ni thorred dan bwynied bach / Llaw gŵr na llw gywirach* ‘There has not been severed with a little poniard / a more faithful man’s hand or oath’, and for the context, see *ibid.* 41.29–30 (and explanatory notes).

²³⁸ GG.net poem 121.

²³⁹ GDEp 6.13–14 *Os da gor-ffwys deigr a ffon, / Da yw’r aradr yr awron* ‘If the resting of daggers and a staff is good, / good is the plough at this time’; see *ibid.* 13n.

²⁴⁰ GG.net 94.35 *I’r ffon y bu’r Cyffiniaid* ‘the Cyffins were destined for the crozier’; *ibid.* 79.18 *Na ffon rag na phen yr arth* ‘either a ragged staff or a bear’s head’; for *ffon* ‘spear’ see 30n above.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.* 80.14, 20.23–4. Cf. GGDt 13.28 *Cyffesed, ef caiff aseth* ‘Let him confess, he will receive the rod [of punishment]’ (from Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr’s satire on Casnodyn), and the disdainful use of the word *ffonnod* ‘stroke with a stick, blow, stripe’ (see GPC s.v.) to describe the defeat of the ‘Saxons’ ([g]wŷr *Sacsonia*) in GLCG 104.23–4.

patrons’ ability to keep order. Similar references to spears in this context have been noted above, and indeed it is possible that ‘spear’ was the meaning for *ffon* that the poet had in mind even in the examples discussed here.²⁴² Another word for a staff used by Guto in a similar context is *trosol*:

Ymlid herwyr mal taran
Oll yw’ch gwaith, a llochi gwan,
Torri gwayw, anturio gwŷr,
Taro’r trosol trwy’r treiswyr.

*it is your job absolutely to persecute outlaws / like a thunderbolt, and to shelter the weak, / to break a spear, to challenge men, / to thrust the bar through the oppressors.*²⁴³

Elsewhere Guto uses the same word to describe the prowess of patrons in a feat of strength, perhaps akin to the Scottish feat of tossing the caber.²⁴⁴ It is worth noting, even so, that in a poem by Lewys Glyn Cothi a *trosol* appears to be a spear used for jousting (*ymwan*).²⁴⁵

Like knives and staves, axes were commonly found as everyday objects and indeed Guto himself refers to the use of an axe to fell trees in a metaphorical context.²⁴⁶ The use of either ordinary axes or specific battleaxes in war is not mentioned in Guto’s poems except for a single reference to the famous weapon of Sir Hywel ap Gruffudd of Chwilog, Eifionydd, also known as Syr Hywel ‘y Fwyall’ (of the Axe). According to the introduction to a praise poem by Iolo Goch in the manuscript BL Add 14866, 118, in the hand of David Johns (1586–7), Sir Hywel was rewarded for his bravery at Poitiers (1356) by being given, amongst other things, a

²⁴² Either ‘staff’ or ‘spear’ are possible for the *ffon* in GG.net 95.51–2 *Trugarog at rai gwirion, / At rai ffeils y try ei ffon* ‘Merciful towards the good, / he points [turns] his spear [staff] at [towards] the false’.

²⁴³ Ibid. 27.27–30; GPC s.v. *trosol* ‘(crow)bar, lever, bolt, pole, staff, club’.

²⁴⁴ GG.net 36.43–4 *Ni thrwsiodd maen na throsol, / Ni bu neb na bai’n ei ôl* ‘No-one handled stone nor bar, / there was no-one who was not inferior to him’; *ibid.* 40.17–18 *Ni thry mab nac athro maith / Drosolion a droes eilwaith* ‘No son or experienced instructor / will wield again the poles which he tossed.’ A third example is in a series of *englynion* of uncertain authorship, *ibid.* 121.13–16 *Ymafel a wnaud, ymofyn – bar traws / A bwrw trosol celyn / Neu faen llwyth, nofio’n y llyn, / Neitio, rhedeg, naid tridyn* ‘You’d wrestle, fetch a solid bar / and throw a pole of holly / or a heavy stone, swim in the lake, / jump, run, a leap as long as three men.’ Cf. the *bar* *ibid.* 68b.3 (see 266n below).

²⁴⁵ GLGC 120.45–6.

²⁴⁶ GG.net 37.43–8 *Dau â chywyddau i chwi / Drwy fydr sy’n ymdrafodi: / Swrdwal waig, saer dilesgerdd, / Bu’n bwrw coed bôn a brig cerdd; / Llawdden â’i fwyell eiddaw / Ni ad gwŷdd deunydd llei daw* ‘Two men with *cywyddau* for you / are vying in verse: / splendid Swrdwal, architect of nimble song, / has been felling wood of song from top to bottom; / Llawdden with his axe – / he doesn’t leave timber for material wherever he alights.’ See further M.T. Davies, ‘“Aed i’r coed i dorri cof”: Dafydd ap Gwilym and the Metaphorics of Carpentry’, CMCS 30 (Winter 1995), 67–86.

special allowance of food for his axe.²⁴⁷ Guto refers to this story in his poem in praise of Sieffrai Cyffin of Oswestry and his wife Siân, using it as a device to praise the lavishness of the feast they have provided:

Fal Hywel yn rhyfelu,
Felly 'dd wyf, â'r fwyall ddu,
A gâi unsaig o Winsawr
Ac arall i'r fwyall fawr.

*Like Hywel waging war / with the black axe, so am I, / who received one dish from Windsor / and another dish for the great axe.*²⁴⁸

It is interesting to note that there are no references to this axe either in Iolo Goch's praise poem to Sir Hywel or in the two elegies sung for him by Gruffudd ap Maredudd and Rhisierdyn.²⁴⁹ Indeed, battleaxes are rarely mentioned at all in fourteenth-century poetry and, where they are found, they are associated not with Welsh patrons but with Norsemen.²⁵⁰ Battleaxes are not very common in fifteenth-century poetry either, although there are some examples – several occurring in the works of Lewys Glyn Cothi – in which patrons are described as wielding these weapons or are themselves represented as figurative 'axes', as well as references to axes used by less privileged soldiers and to their presence on the battlefield in a more general sense.²⁵¹

The scarcity of axes in Guto's poems and in those of many of his contemporaries may be attributed in part to conservatism, since these weapons were not well established in the bardic tradition.²⁵² In this they may be compared to knives, which made a similarly late appearance into the vocabulary of praise poetry. A second similarity between axes and knives is that within these broad categories of artefact were encompassed

²⁴⁷ GGMD iii 136; see also GIG 185; IGP 158; GSRh 99; A.D. Carr, 'Welshmen and the Hundred Years' War', WHR 4 (1968–9), 29–30.

²⁴⁸ GG.net 97.41–4.

²⁴⁹ IGP poem 2; GGMD iii poem 2; GSRh poem 6. Other, later references to Sir Hywel's axe are found, however, in GLGC 24.31–2 and GDT 16.31–2.

²⁵⁰ The axe-wielding Norsemen are stereotypical enemies in IGP 4.41–2, but in GMBen 22.35 (an anonymous prophetic poem perhaps addressed to Owain Lawgoch, although it may be of later, fifteenth-century date) they are followers of the 'son of prophecy', an idea also found in other poems of this genre (ibid.n).

²⁵¹ See, for example, GDEp 12.49–50 *Dwy rodd a gedwir iddo, / Â'r fwyall fawr felly fo* 'Two gifts are kept for him, / with the great axe so let it be'; GLGC 45.19–20 *troist wŷr yn gyrff, troist rai'n gall, / ti â'th faeart a'th fwyall* 'you turned men into corpses, / you (over)turned some wisely, you with your bay horse and your axe'; ibid. 112.109–10 *Arddwrn yw Herbart i Gaerferddin, / llaw yw a bwyall i Gaerleon* 'Herbert is a fist for Carmarthen, / he is a hand and an axe for Caerleon'; ibid. 18.29–30 *Llewod a llu o waywawr, / a llu maes o fwyall mawr* 'Lions [i.e. brave warriors] and a host of spears, / and a battlefield host of great axes'; ibid. 15.51 *eryr a brŷr lle briwid – bwyall* 'an eagle and a nobleman where axes were broken'.

²⁵² Axes are not mentioned in the surviving works of the Poets of the Princes, though there are three possible examples in contemporary or earlier 'Hengerdd' poems, see Day, 'Arfau', 340–1.

humble everyday tools as well as high-status weapons, and a third is that, even as weapons, they carried some unfortunate connotations. By their very nature, axes were associated more with brute force than with the subtler kind of skill needed for sword-fighting, added to which was the above-mentioned association of the battleaxe with Viking marauders. Similar factors may account for the scarcity of references in the poetry to staff-weapons such as poll-axes and bills – indeed, such weapons are not represented at all in Guto’s poems.²⁵³ In this case a further consideration may have been the common and long-standing association of staff-weapons with low-status infantry soldiers (although it must be noted that poll-axes, especially, were also used by high-status fighting men in the later medieval period).²⁵⁴ Despite the important role that ‘billmen’ played in the Wars of the Roses,²⁵⁵ it appears that they, like archers, cannoneers and gunners, were of little interest to the poets, who were required by convention and self-interest to focus their praise upon their wealthy patrons. Lewys Glyn Cothi, it is true, seems to have been particularly aware of the role of the ‘common soldiers’ and their weapons, but even in his case such men are used primarily to demonstrate the military might of their leaders rather than being praised for their own contribution.²⁵⁶ The same is true of Guto’s reference to the armaments of the soldiers who followed Siôn Hanmer, and even his lively and memorable portrayal of Matthew Gough’s men also serves to praise Matthew himself as the one who inspires their adventurous conduct and shares in their ‘play’ ([g]warau).²⁵⁷

Conclusion

On the whole, Guto’r Glyn appears to be a rather traditional poet when it comes to his depictions of weapons and warfare. Maintaining a pragmatic focus upon high-status fighting men, he overstates the importance of mounted combat with spears, ignores other staff-weapons and relegates archery and gunpowder artillery to mainly metaphorical contexts. The bloodied, steely, bright, fiery, broken or praise-winning spears and swords found in his praise poems would have been familiar to the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Poets of the Princes, and even his allusions to the couched lance technique may be regarded, for the most part, as following in

²⁵³ The *hog* ‘billhook’ in GG.net 122.23 is probably not a weapon, and in any case the attribution of this poem to Guto is uncertain; see also *ibid.* 68a.4 *hoc* ‘billhook’ (above, 16n).

²⁵⁴ DeVries and Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, 28–30; *idem*, *Medieval Weapons*, 188–91; see also the account of Sir Richard Herbert’s use of a poll-axe at the battle of Edgecote / Banbury, Evans, *Wales and the Wars of the Roses*, 106–7.

²⁵⁵ Boardman, *Medieval Soldier*, 148–49; Strickland and Hardy, *Great Warbow*, 378–9.

²⁵⁶ See, for example, GLGC 54.45–7 *Yn ei ôl gwaywawr a anelid, / miliwn o fwâu mal na feiid / o flaen y lluoedd a gyflenwid* ‘Behind him spears would be aimed, / a million bows would be supplied / before the hosts so that he would not be blamed’ (i.e. ‘... so he would be praised’).

²⁵⁷ GG.net 75.55–6, quoted above; *ibid.* 3.31–42.

the tradition of his fourteenth-century predecessors such as Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Llwyd. A notable exception is his blow-by-blow description of Gruffudd Fychan jousting with a couched lance (if indeed he is the author of this poem), which appears to have no precedent in the earlier poetry.²⁵⁸

Guto's depiction of archery, too, derives in part from the earlier bardic tradition, and may owe a particular debt to Dafydd ap Gwilym.²⁵⁹ Even so, his archery imagery must also have been informed and enriched by his own experiences, and his contemporaries' awareness of his military experience in Normandy would have added to the power of his references to himself as a 'shooter' of praise or satire. His frequent, varied, and sometimes very detailed and extended use of archery metaphors marks him out amongst the poets of the fifteenth century and, indeed, it seems that he influenced some of his contemporaries and successors in this regard: the opening words of his 'bow of song' poem in praise of Rhys ap Dafydd of Uwch Aeron are echoed to varying degrees in verses by Lewys Glyn Cothi and by the sixteenth-century poet Wiliam Llŷn, with a similar metaphorical context in each case.²⁶⁰ Likewise, though Guto was not the first Welsh poet to mention guns, his references to them in his praise poetry, stemming no doubt from his own experiences in Normandy, would have helped to establish them in the bardic tradition and in the wider consciousness of his compatriots at home in Wales.²⁶¹ Indeed, Guto's poems provide the earliest evidence for the term *maen gwn*, a literal rendering into Welsh of the contemporary English term *gunstone*, and his readiness to make use of foreign terminology is also shown by his (perhaps unique) use of the loanword *lownsgae* 'lancegay, light spear', discussed above.²⁶²

Guto's military experiences are certainly reflected in his depiction of weaponry, and yet he does not mention any actual fighting on his own part; neither does he display any particular sense of solidarity with his fellow

²⁵⁸ For further instances of Iolo Goch's influence on Guto, see GG.net poem 1 (background note). Guto was clearly very conscious of Iolo's eminence in the bardic tradition, referring to him by name in at least six poems (ibid. 55.23, 63.29, 82.41, 85.1, 87.5 and 50, 113.56; Iolo is also mentioned ibid. 121.4, a poem of uncertain authorship). Most of these references imply comparison between Guto and Iolo, and indeed this is directly stated ibid. 63.29 *Ail oeddyn Iolo iddynt* 'I was a second Iolo for them', and in Gutun Owain's elegy for Guto, ibid. 126.7–8 *Ef fu'r gŵr a fawr gerynt / A eiliai gerdd Iolo gynt* 'He was the man whom they greatly loved / who formerly formed Iolo's poem.'

²⁵⁹ See the discussion of archery, above. Guto himself mentions Dafydd in ibid. 55.21, 82.42 and 87.3, and ibid. 35.47 he refers to Henry Griffith 'calling for a poem by Dafydd ap Gwilym' (*Galw cerdd Ddafydd ap Gwylim*), perhaps recited by Guto himself (ibid.n). See also Salisbury, *Ar Drywydd Guto'r Glyn*, 6; Dafydd Johnston, 3 above.

²⁶⁰ GG.net 11.1–2, quoted above; GLGC 155.9–18, 204.23–6; Morrice (ed.), *Barddoniaeth Wiliam Llŷn*, III, 35–40.

²⁶¹ See the discussion of the 'normalizing' of the gun in Evans, '“Y carl a'i trawai o'r cudd”', 84–7.

²⁶² See also J.E.C. Williams, 'Guto'r Glyn', A.O.H. Jarman and G.R. Hughes (eds.), *A Guide to Welsh Literature*, ii: 1282–c.1550, revised by D. Johnston (second ed. Cardiff, 1997), 197–221.

professional archers. Even in the case of his metaphorical archery imagery, the references to targets (*nodau*) and hunting call to mind the leisure pursuits of the gentry rather than the brutal business of warfare.

As mentioned above, Guto attributes prowess at archery to his patron Henry Griffith in two different poems, but nowhere does he boast of his own skill at this feat. His reticence in this regard is particularly noticeable in his praise poem to Henry’s black hair:

Och ym er dir a chymell
O bu ŵr â bwa well,
Na chystal, ynial annerch,
Ar y maen mawr er mwyn merch.
I minnau, gwarau gwiwraen,
Y bu air mawr er bwrw maen;
Hiroedl a fo i Harri
Y sydd i’m diswyddaw i!

*May there be affliction for me on account of force and coercion / if there was ever a better man with a bow, / or one as good (address full of vigour) / at throwing the big rock to impress a girl. / I myself, very expert play, / have had a high reputation in throwing the stone; / long life to Harry, / who is putting me in the shade!*²⁶³

The fact that this passage mentions Guto’s stone-throwing ability, and not his archery prowess, is understandable if he was a better archer than Henry, in which case the only tactful course would be not to mention his own shooting skills at all. It is perfectly possible, however, that Guto was *not* an acknowledged champion at target-shooting, despite his boasting of how well his metaphorical arrows of praise struck their mark. Though professional archers were tested before enlisting they did not need to be able to shoot with great accuracy, and indeed in a large-scale battle the rate at which they loosed their arrows was more important than a precise aim.²⁶⁴

Tellingly, Guto’s contemporaries also mention his prowess at feats *other* than archery. One of Dafydd ab Edmwnd’s satirical poems alleges that Guto has ruptured himself from lifting stones in his youth and indeed Guto himself refers to throwing stones in his reply.²⁶⁵ Dafydd refers again to Guto’s feats in a much shorter satirical poem which describes him throwing a bar and stone in front of *arglwydd Penfro* ‘the lord of Pembroke’ (probably the first earl, William Herbert), with embarrassing consequences.²⁶⁶ Whether or not a real injury and incident are being described in these poems, they support the idea that Guto had a reputation

²⁶³ GG.net 33.39–46.

²⁶⁴ Curry, *Agincourt*, 71, 265.

²⁶⁵ GG.net 68a.15–18; *ibid.* 68.42.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 68b.3–4 *Bwrw y bar, poed byr y bo, / Bwrw y maen a bram yno* ‘he cast the bar, may its duration be short, / cast the stone and then a fart.’

for feats of strength in his youth, and this is also made clear in Gutun Owain's elegy for him.²⁶⁷ Guto would have had to have been a powerful man in order to fight effectively with a longbow, of course, and indeed other poems refer directly to his strength when he was young.²⁶⁸ Nowhere is his strength specifically linked to his ability to draw a bow, however, even though this was a well-worn idea which did find expression in other contemporary poems.²⁶⁹ Perhaps, having experienced the grim reality of fighting with a longbow, Guto felt a certain disdain for the 'leisure' archery practised by the gentry. It is, however, difficult to argue that Guto felt any distaste for war itself. The genres in which he sang gave little opportunity for the expression of such feelings, if he had them, but overall the impression given by his poems is that of an enthusiastic interest in many aspects of warfare.²⁷⁰

Guto's favoured genre of praise poetry also restricted his opportunities to mention his own military prowess or his experiences as a soldier. Indeed, such references are unusual in the poetry in general, though not unheard of.²⁷¹ Other, more specific factors may have contributed to his reticence as far as archery was concerned, namely the relatively low social status of professional archers and the nature and connotations of archery itself. As noted above, the bow's very effectiveness as a weapon, in the hands of the humblest wielder, often aroused suspicion and resentment, particularly in the higher ranks of society. And from the point of view of the poets the use of archery in battle was hard to reconcile with the old ideals of heroic poetry which demanded dramatic close-quarters interaction, preferably involving weapons such as swords, spears and shields which could be battered, broken or stained in blood. Although poets could, and did, use different varieties of archery imagery to praise their patrons, neither bow nor arrows could rival these other weapons as symbols of courage and military prowess.

It is understandable, then, that the (real-life) weapon of his own that Guto mentions most often, in four or five different poems, is his sword. In part, the sword's prominence reflects the fact that it could be used more naturally in the relevant contexts within these particular poems, being

²⁶⁷ Ibid. 126.15 *Ac ar faen gorau a fu* 'and he was best at throwing a heavy stone'; ibid. 126.17–18 *Dwyn o nerth, doen' yn ei ôl, / Einion aur a wnâi'n wrol* 'He'd courageously carry a golden anvil / with strength, they'd come after him'.

²⁶⁸ Guto is described as having been 'strong' (*cryf*) in his youth ibid. 65a.29, and ibid. 101a.33 he is said to have been 'a strong boy like a giant' (*gwas cryf iawn megis cawr*). For the strength and effort required of professional archers, see further Hardy, *Longbow*, 217–21; Strickland and Hardy, *Great Warbow*, 13–18, 27–31.

²⁶⁹ Examples are given in 189n above.

²⁷⁰ See Lewis, 'Gyrfa Filwrol Guto'r Glyn', 86–8, 95–6; Lewis, 'Late Medieval Welsh Praise Poetry and Nationality', 126–7.

²⁷¹ See, for example, Llywelyn ab y Moel's self-deprecating account of the battle of Gwaun Gaseg (GSCyf poem 10) and Ieuan ap Rhydderch's 'Cywydd y Bost' (GIRh poem 3).

commonly worn about the person, used for self-defence and associated with bucklers (an item for which Guto composed a poem of thanks). But in a wider sense, too, it seems Guto’s sword came most readily to hand as a symbol of his identity as a fighting man. Archers, as noted above, were accustomed to fight with swords as well as bows, and indeed it is possible that the sword Guto mentions in his poems was the same one that he had carried in Normandy, thus representing a direct, material link with his soldier past.²⁷² Perhaps, too, the chivalric, noble connotations of the sword appealed to Guto as a symbol of the status he had achieved, or to which he aspired, in Welsh gentry society.

It seems, then, that he regarded himself, or wished to be regarded, not specifically as a (bow-wielding) archer-poet but in more general terms as a soldier-poet. This is certainly the impression gained from his poems sung to military commanders of the Normandy campaign, particularly his ‘battle with the wine’ poem addressed to Thomas ap Watkin, in which he represents poets as men-at-arms and lowly reciters as archers.²⁷³ Guto’s pride in his own military prowess is surely also reflected in his satire on Dafydd ab Edmwnd, with its taunting question *ai sawdiwr wyd?* ‘are you a soldier?’, and in his joking reference to jousting against his fellow poets in his poem of thanks for a horse.²⁷⁴ His bardic ‘soldier’ persona, therefore, had various aspects at different times: archer, jouster, swordsman, strong-man and comrade-in-arms.

In a more reflective mood, as an old man, Guto again references his identity as a soldier in a poem for Abbot Dafydd ab Ieuan of Valle Crucis:

Er bod talau â’r bateloedd
Wrth ryfeloedd ni thrafaeliaf.

*Though armies receive payments, / I will not journey on account of wars.*²⁷⁵

To his fellow poets, likewise, Guto’s Glyn was a soldier as well as being a master of ‘man’s praise’ (*cywydd mab* or *cywydd gŵr*).²⁷⁶ Llywelyn ap Gutun calls him both *gwalch cywyddau gwŷr* ‘the soldier [literally ‘hawk’] of praise *cywyddau*’ and *y milwr mau* ‘the soldier of mine’,²⁷⁷ and though Guto’s stated wish to be laid to rest beneath a carved depiction of his sword and buckler may never have been granted, he would surely have been pleased that

²⁷² It is interesting to note that Guto accuses Llywelyn ap Gutun of coveting both his sword and his cloak in GG.net 65.40, in the light of the suggestion in Williams, ‘Guto’r Glyn’, 207–8, that this may have been the ‘golden’ cloak given to him by Sir Richard Gethin at the time of his military service (and commemorated in GHS poem 24).

²⁷³ GG.net poem 4, discussed in the section on bows and arrows.

²⁷⁴ Ibid. 67.2; *ibid.* 51.49–52, quoted and discussed above in the section on spears.

²⁷⁵ Ibid. 111.53–4; see also *ibid.* 53n (and background note).

²⁷⁶ Williams, ‘Guto’r Glyn’, 212–13.

²⁷⁷ GG.net 65a.42 and 33.

Gutun Owain's elegy for him contained these particular lines:

Milwr fu, mawl ar ei fin,
Mwy ei urddas no Merddin.

*He was a soldier with greater honour than Myrddin, / praise on his
lips.*²⁷⁸

²⁷⁸ Ibid. 126.21–2. Myrddin was famed as a soldier as well as a poet (ibid. 2n).