

The History of the Nannau Family (Merionethshire) to 1623

Thesis presented in candidature for the degree of Master of Arts of the University of Wales, 1958

By Brynle Rees Parry, B. A.

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(MERIONETHSHIRE), to 1623.

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One Inch to
One Mile

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ABBREVIATIONS.

Arch. Camb.
Ancient Deeds.

"Augmentations Records".

B.B.C.S.

B.M.
"Bywgraffiadur"

Caerns. Hist. Soc. Trans.

Cal. Charter Rolls.
Cal. Close Rolls.
Cal. Fine Rolls.
Cal. Pat. Rolls.
Cal. State Papers (Dom.)

Cymmr. Trans.

D.N.B.

Dwnn.

Econ. Hist. Rev.
E.H.R.

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Families with their Collateral
Branches in Denbighshire,
Merionethshire, and other parts!"

PREFACE

A survey of the history of a family from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries must of necessity rest on such unevenly distributed evidence that a balanced and comprehensive plan is impossible. Whereas the materials for the study of the Mannau family's history during the medieval period are sparse and often fragmentary, the Tudor period is almost overwhelmingly documented. Consequently more space has been devoted to this latter period.

Historical evidence, moreover, does not lend itself to any scientific division into "water-tight compartments". While the aim of this dissertation has been, primarily, to trace the family's fortunes chronologically, it was thought desirable to break this chronological sequence in Chapter Four in an attempt to treat one particular topic - the development of the estate during the crucial period 1450 - 1540. The abundance of the evidence available during the period 1540 - 1623 - covering the lives of Gruffydd Wyn, Hugh Nanney Hôn and his son Gruffydd Nanney, and the early years of Hugh Nanney the Younger - involved the treatment of that period in

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three separate chapters. In Chapters Five, Six and Seven an attempt has been made to present a general, comprehensive view of the activities of a gentry family in Merionethshire under the later Tudors. An annual income of £300 - £350 was far from negligible at this time, and the Manneys were undoubtedly among the foremost of the Merionethshire gentry. Chapter Five deals with their education, their official activities, their interest in Welsh culture, and the management and development of their estate. Chapter Six attempts an account of their acquisition of monastic properties after the Dissolution, and a further aspect of their activities - their litigation - is considered in the final chapter.

It is hoped that the following account will show, moreover, the emergence of a native Welsh family out of the tribal "gwely", into the ranks of the Tudor gentry.

CHAPTER 1.

Pro - 1282

"Gorau o gard achau gwyr
card Nannau, cwrdd hen Ynwr."

Watkin Clywedog.

Nannau¹, the seat of the Nanneys, lies within the parish of Llanfachreth in the old commote of Talybent in the county of Merioneth. Pennant claims for it "perhaps the highest situation of any gentleman's house in Britain."², and Guto'r Glyn refers to it as "uchaf tir."³ It is in fact seven hundred feet above sea level.⁴

The nature of the countryside in which Nannau is situated has been a matter for comment to travellers ever since the time of Giraldus Cambrensis, who remarks that he and his party found a ford near Llanelltyd by which they could cross the Mawddach. Giraldus was impressed by the nature of the country - which prompted his famous description: "Haec autem terra Chanani, et praecipue Merionyth, omnium totius Kambriae terrarum hispida magis est et horribilis. Habet enim montes altissimos, arctos tamen et in modum arcis acutissimos, nec raros quidem sed creberrimos, et tanta inaequalitate consertos, ut in sum^mis eorum verticibus pastores

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1. Nannau is the old Welsh form of "nentydd", plural of "nant" (stream), Ifor Williams, "Enwau Lleoedd", P.26.
 2. Pennant, "Tours in Wales", (1883 ed., Vol.11, P.243).
 3. Ifor Williams and J. Ll. Williams, "Gwaith Guto'r Glyn", P.153.
 4. "Bywgraffiadur", P.640.

confabulantes ad invicem vel conviciantes, si concurre
forte statuerint, a mane in vesperam vix convenient."¹.

The rough and rugged nature of the country in which Nannau is situated is important, since, of course, the lives of the Nanneys and their neighbours were to a large extent moulded by their environment. The county contained "heaps of mountains", as Camden put it, which "feed infinite numbers of sheep."² The land was suitable for little else, as John Speed explained in 1668, for "by reason of the unevenness of the soile and rocks so near the face of the earth, the Plough cannot be drawn, nor the Corn prosper."³.

Moreover, the rugged nature of the country produced an environment of isolation and often of lawlessness. These two factors, the latter often a complement of the former, were constantly found in the whole of Wales and

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1. Giraldus Cambrensis, "Itinerarium Cambriae", (Rolls ed.), P.123. Trans. by Sir Richard Colt Hoare ("The Historical Works of Giraldus Cambrensis", ed. Wright, P.438): "This territory of Conan, and particularly Merionyth, is the rudest and roughest district of all Wales: the ridge of its mountains are very high and narrow, terminating in sharp peaks, and so irregularly jumbled together, that if the shepherds conversing or disputing with each other, from their summits, should agree to meet, they could scarcely effect their purpose in the course of the whole day."
 2. William Camden, "Britannia", (1701 ed.) Vol. 11. P.657.
 3. John Speed, "A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World", 1668. (Ch. 10, Unpaginated.)

were particularly evident in Merionethshire. In the early Middle Ages, up to the twelfth century, this county was but one of the many in Wales where ruthlessness and internecine warfare prevailed, a ruthlessness which was in part the product of peculiar social and political conditions, and partly "a local manifestation of the endemic ruthlessness of a violent age."¹.

Merioneth seems to have shared with the rest of Wales a reputation for lawlessness, which was on the whole justified, and which continued until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1700 one of the many English satirists who poured calumny on Wales and the Welsh during the seventeenth century,² described the country as "the rag end of Creation",³ while another, Robert Burton - a plagiarist and purveyor of cheap literature - claimed in 1695 that Merionethshire was "the roughest and most barren Shire of Wales."⁴.

To the English traveller of the eighteenth century, Merioneth was the abode of Philistines, and the enlightened and cultured Sir Thomas Gery Cullum,

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1. J.G. Edwards, Review of "Brut y Tywysogion", (Red Book of Hergest) ed. T. Jones, in "History", Oct. 1957, P.215.
 2. W.J. Hughes, "Wales and the Welsh in English Literature", PP. 38 - 44.
 3. E.B., "A Trip to North Wales", quoted by W.J. Hughes, op.cit., P.45.
 4. Robert Burton, "The History of the Principality of Wales" (1730 ed.), P.166.

who toured Wales in 1775, could not understand the gentlemen of that county who "want, they say, none of the Necessaries of Life, and are perfectly happy in their situation." But, he asks, "who that has not once experienced the pleasures of polite and literary Converse, could endure living here?" He comments thus on their attitude: "I cannot allow them Happiness, unless that consists only in not being starved with Hunger and Cold, which their Sheep will preserve them from."¹ A nineteenth century writer could look back, in 1884, with a gentle patronizing humour at the state of Wales in 1780 and of Merionethshire in particular. He illustrates the isolation of Dolgelley, the post-town of which was Oswestry, forty miles away, by the fact that "the Dolgellians were in continual trouble to find a carrier who did not get so drunk on the way as to lose every letter entrusted to his care."²

The nineteenth century writer seems to have looked with greater favour on the Merionethshire gentry. The Romantic Revival had awakened a genuine desire to "discover" Wales, and "the extravagant abuse of seventeenth century

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1. "Y Cymroddor", Vol. 38, PP. 57 - 8.
 2. "The Cornhill Magazine", Oct. 1884 - "A glimpse of Wales a Hundred Years Ago", P. 410.

writers" now gave place to more favourable opinions.^{1.}

Richard Fenton, writing in 1813, wrote of Nannau that the garden in July "abounded with vegetables of all sorts and all fruits then in season, strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, currants and cherries."^{2.}

Richard Llwyd, writing in 1832, adds a further compliment: "The estate is covered with fine timber, which clothes all the sides of the dingles for many miles: the park is remarkable for its small but excellent venison."^{3.}

Such was the opinion, too, of Thomas Turner, who travelled in Wales in 1837. He found that at Nannau: "The surrounding grounds are beautifully wooded. The oak, the beech, the walnut, the acacia, the fir, the lime, the ash, with almost every variety of tree and shrub, are grouped in good taste, and the gardens are spacious and beautiful."^{4.}

Robert Vaughan, the Merionethshire antiquary, in his "Survey of Merioneth", referring to Llanfachreth, tells us it "hath only ye township of Nanney in it;

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1. W.J. Hughes, op.cit., P.91.
 2. Journal Mer. Hist. Rec. Soc., Vol.11., P.139.
 3. Llwyd, "Topographical Notices to Wynne's edition of Powell's History of Wales", P.221.
 4. Thomas Turner, "Narrative of a Journey Associated with a Fly", pp.59 - 60.

7.

here is the seate of the auncient family of ye Nanneys
linealy descendinge from Cadwgan ap Bleddyn prince of
Powys and ruler of South Wales."¹. This was the Nannau
pedigree as traced by the bards and other genealogists,
a pedigree which is, in general, supported and proved by
documentary evidence - wherever that is to be found.²

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1. E.D. Jones, "The Survey of Merionethshire by Robert Vaughan", Journal Mer. Hist. Rec. Soc., Vol.11. P.222.
 2. The pedigree is given in narrative, tabular and metrical form, viz:
 - (a) Narrative: N.L.W. Peniarth 125 (PP.150b - 151b), 127 Part 1 (PP.105,106,137), 128 (pp.68,633,674), 129 (P.121), 134 (P.183), 138 (P.306); B.M.Stowe MS.669, f.98; Wrexham MS.1 (Gwenogfryn Evans, Report on MSS. in the Welsh Language", Vol.11, Part 1, P.351); Dwnn, P.226; "Llyfr Sylva", P.213; and Robert Vaughan, "Notes on the House of Nannau", Arch. Camb. 1863, P.129.
 - (b) Tabular: Griffith, P.200; Dwnn, P.84; B.M.Harl. MS.2100; N.L.W. Peniarth 74 (P.68), 134 (P.138), 139 Part 1 (P.302), 287 Part 1 (P.306 ff. - Robert Vaughan's Book of Pedigrees).
 - (c) Metrical: Vide E.D. Jones, "The Family of Nannau of Nannau", Journal Mer. Hist. Rec. Soc., 1953, P. 5 ff.

The pedigrees vary only in minor details, as in the later descents of the many cadet branches of the family, or in the names of the wives of the earlier members of the pedigree. In narrative form the pedigree would be, from Hugh Nanney the Younger (ob. 1647), that given by Stowe MS. 669; "Huw nannau ab Gruff Nannau ab huw nannau ab gruff Nannau, ab howel ab Dd ab meirig fychan ab howel selyf ab meirig llwyd ab meirig fychan ab ynyr vychan ab ynyr ab Meirig ab madog ab Kadwgan ab bleddyn ab Kynfyn." This pedigree of sixteen generations covers about six hundred years.¹ Most of the uncertainties arise out of Robert Vaughan's pedigree of Colonel John Jones of Maesygarnedd² in which the Nanneys appear. This is a large pedigree roll in narrative form which includes various histories and which registers the division of the inheritance among the younger sons. It is in fact a seventeenth century account of the operation of "gavelkind." It includes a great number of younger sons who do not appear in the other pedigrees, with details of their inheritances. Whatever uncertainties there may be, however, they do not in any way detract from the genuine and authentic main line of the pedigree.

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1. Vide Infra, Appendix V, P.368, for a tabular version of the Nannau pedigree.
 2. Robert Vaughan, "Notes on the House of Nannau", "Arch. Camb." 1863, PP. 129 - 133.

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What we have preserved in the Nannau pedigree is the bare outline of the development of a native family, in three main stages - first the royal family, represented by Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, then the degeneration by way of Cadwgan, a younger son, and Madog, Meurig and Ynyr to a lower status, until the third stage is begun consequent upon the English conquest by Edward 1, with Ynyr Vychan. It is he who inaugurates a period of co-operation with the alien administration which is to continue and, together with their ability to take advantage of the break-down of the tribal system and the introduction of new land tenures, lead to the re-emergence of the family in the sixteenth century under Gruffydd Wyn and Hugh Nanney Hên as "gentry" occupying a prominent position in their locality and in the shire. The Nanneys and their ancestors are, indeed, a perfect example of an indigenous family, whose roots are deep within their native soil, yet co-operating with the new administrators and conquerors, allied at every crisis to the English Crown, and at the same time managing to avoid the pitfalls of the economic situation at a time when little was stable owing to the disappearance of the old native economy. But they were by no means neglectful of the

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native Welsh culture, as is shown by their patronage of the bards.¹:

The very early portion of the Mannau pedigree, from Bleddyn ap Cynfyn down to Iayr ap Meurig, is unauthenticated. We know there was a younger son of Bleddyn ap Cynfyn called Cadwgan who conquered Meirionydd and placed Uchtryd ap Edwin as vassal lord there, until Uchtryd grew too powerful and was overthrown, c.1115, by the sons of Cadwgan.² It has been suggested that Cadwgan was the re-founder, after St. Illtyd, of Llanelltyd, populated sparsely by his free followers and relatives, with a small colony of serfs at Ilanfachreth, and that he also founded Dolgelley as a serf village.³ Bloyd in his "History of Powys Fadog", following Harl. MS.2299, tells us that Bleddyn ap Cynfyn married four times, and that by his second wife, a daughter of Brochwael ap Meelyn, Lord of Tŷrcelyn in Anglesey, he had two sons, one of whom was Cadwgan of Mannau, Lord of Penllyn, Meirionydd, Mawddwy, Cyfeiliog, Arwystli,

1. Vide E.D. Jones, op.cit.

2. T.Jones Pierce, "Ancient Meirionydd", Journal Mer.Hist. Rec.Soc., Vol.1., 1949-51, P.17. J.E.Lloyd, "History of Wales", P.416, states that this was the first example in Welsh history of the purely feudal condition that the vassal would be faithful to his lord and render him aid against his enemies. c.f. "Brut y Tywysygion" (Red Book of Hergest) ed. T. Jones, P.101, "For

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Ceredigion and Ystrad Tywi.¹ Bleddyn himself was killed by Rhys ap Owain and the "uchelwyr" or Ystrad Tywi in 1075.² According to "Powys Fadog", Cadwgan's chief residence was at Nannau, and according to the same authority he was attacked and slain at Welshpool by his nephew Madog ap Rhirid ap Bleddyn in 1109³, although J.E. Lloyd gives the date as 1111.⁴ So far, that is, the lords of Nannau have also been Lords of Meirionydd. "Powys Fadog" tells us, however, that the next in the pedigree, Madog, was the third son of Cadwgan by his first wife Gwenllian, daughter of Gruffydd ap Cynan, King of Gwynedd.⁵ He is still styled Lord of Nannau, but it is his brother, the eldest son, Einion ap Cadwgan, who is Lord of Meirionydd.

2. Cont. from previous page.

Cadwgan ap Bleddyn had given Meirionydd and Cyfeiliog to Uchdryd ab Edwin on condition that he should be true to him and to his sons a helper against all their enemies. But he was an adversary and warlike against Cadwgan and his sons."

3. T.P. Ellis, "Dolgelly and Llanelltyd", P.27;
"Merioneth Notes", in "Y Cymaredor", Vol. 38, P.18.

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1. "Powys Fadog", Vol. 1, P.88.
2. J.E. Lloyd, "History of Wales", P.377.
3. "Powys Fadog", Vol. 1, PP.90, 93.
4. J.E. Lloyd, op.cit., P.421.
5. "Powys Fadog", Vol.1, P.93, following "Brut y Tywysogion". This is supported by "Elvyr Sylva", P.214; J.E.Lloyd, op.cit., P.417, N.57, states that "This Gwenllian was probably illegitimate and born about 1080."

This is borne out by the "Brut", where, in the account of the overthrow of Uchtryd ap Edwin, who had built a castle at Cymer, Madog ap Cadwgan is not included among those who attacked him. The "Brut" states that it was Einion ap Cadwgan ap Bleddyn and Gruffydd ap Maredudd ap Bleddyn who "made a solemn pact together to lead an attack against the castle of Uchdryd ap Edwin". Neither is Madog's name mentioned in the subsequent division of the spoils: "And they seized Meirionydd and Cyfeiliog and Penllyn and shared them amongst them. And to Gruffydd ap Maredudd came Cyfeiliog and Mawdwy and half of Penllyn; Meirionydd and the other half of Penllyn to the sons of Cadwgan ap Bleddyn."¹. It is probable, however, that Madog, as one of the "sons of Cadwgan ap Bleddyn", received some part of Meirionydd, - possibly Nannau.

Of the next two generations - Meurig and Inyr -

1. "Brut y Tywysigion", (Red Book of Hergest) ed. T. Jones, P.101.

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Robert Vaughan alone¹. can furnish any details. "Maddoc ap Cadwgan", he writes, had 3 sennes, and he divided his Inheritance among them, vdlit. Mourig had for his part, the Lordship of Manney and divers other lands in the hundred of Merioneth.....Rhiwallon the 2 sennne had the lordship of². and his father's lands in Powys.

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1. Robert Vaughan, "Notes on the House of Mannau", Arch. Camb., 1863, P.130. Griffith, P.200, gives the following genealogical details:

Cadwgan

(i) Eva, d. & h. of
Maddoc ap Philip
ap Uchdryd, Lord
of Cyfeiliog.

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- Maddoc -

(ii) Jane d. of Cynwrig ap
Rhiwallon, Lord of Maelor
Gymraeg.
(iii) Eva d. of Einion ap
Siesyllt, Lord of Mathafarn.

Mourig - Gwenllian, d. & h. of Iorwerth
ap Perydyr ap Idnerth, from
Ednowain ap Bradwen.

Eva

|

Inyr - Gwerfyl * d. & h. of Maddoc ap
Llewarch Vychan ap Llewarch
| Goch, from Llewarch Hwlbwrch.

Inyr Vychan.

- * This is denied by "Llyfr Sylva", P.214, where the mother of Inyr Vychan ap Inyr is given as Gwerfyl "vereh ac etifeddes" Iorwerth ap Peredur ap Ednowain ap Bradwen. It is possible, therefore, that Griffith has confused the two Inyrs and has provided Inyr (and not his son Inyr Vychan) with this mother, confusing also Gwerfyl with Gwenllian. According to "Llyfr Sylva" this part of the pedigree should read:

Maddoc

|

Mourig - ?

|

Inyr - Gwerfyl, d. & h. of Iorwerth
ap Perydyr ap Ednowain ap
Bradwen.

Cont. over.

Madec hyddyan the 3 senne had Cittalgarth, Cynysgadwy, Garn and Penmaen in ye hundred of Pennlyn", It would appear from Vaughan's statement, if his evidence is correct, that Madog retained a large portion of the lands appertaining to the Lordship of Meirionydd as well as some lands in Powys. In his pedigree Robert Vaughan also states that Meurig ap Madog "had a son called Ynyr that was also Lord of Nanney."¹ Apart from that single reference Ynyr is merely a name, although there must have been another Ynyr living within the lifetime of Ynyr Vychan for the other to be called "Vychan". Mr. E.D.Jones, using the principle of three generations per century, has suggested that somewhere in this earlier portion of the pedigree two generations may have been lost, "by the repetition of a name link being ignored, perhaps."²

1. Cont. from previous page.

It will be seen that Griffith not only gives this Gwerfyl the wrong ancestry but also inserts a generation in the person of Idnerth. Griffith and "Llyfr Silyn" agree, however, that the mother of Meurig ap Madec was Eva, d. & h. of Madec ap Philip ap Uchtryd, although Griffith adds "ap Edwin", whereas "Llyfr Silyn" adds "ap Alth."

2. There is a word omitted here in the Arch.Camb.transcript.

1. (This page). Robert Vaughan, op.cit. P.130.
2. E.D.Jones, op.cit. P.7. He gives his reasons for this on P. 7 and gives a pedigree chart on P.15 by way of illustration.

We have thus come to Ymyr Vychan, the first of the Mannau pedigree whose life is really authenticated by record evidence. The background to the period with which we have just dealt has been sketched in general terms by Professor Jones Pierce.¹ He divides the history of ancient Meirionydd up to 1284 into three periods. The first, when Meirionydd was a miniature kingdom, ruled by a royal line founded by Meirion ap Typlawn ap Cunedda Wledig c. 400 A.D. ends with the advent of the Normans. This period saw the establishment of both bond and free settlements in Meirionydd. There were six of the former, placed on low-lying valley sites or close to the river estuaries, in contrast to the settlements of the free population, usually on more elevated ground. These free men would be living a self-sufficing, pastoral, semi-nomadic life confined to the hills. Towards the close of this regal period, however,

1. T. Jones Pierce, "Ancient Meirionydd", Journal Mer. Hist. Rec. Soc., 1949-51, PP.12 - 20.

there was in Meirionydd, as in other parts of Wales, a transition from this nomadic life to a more settled and permanent mode of living, exhibited by a valleyward trend of population, the occupation of permanent homes, and the working of arable land on elevated positions in the valleys and the coastal plain.^{1.} These settlers, sparsely scattered over the countryside, controlled both their settlement and the surrounding mountain waste within well-defined and static boundaries. They created for themselves permanent resting-places, or "gwelyau", and were the founders of the clans or "gwelygorddau" which are found occupying the free townships of Meirionydd in the age of Llywelyn the Last. Professor Jones Pierce states that the situation of these settlements is generally known, and that they were ultimately grouped for ecclesiastical

1. Professor Jones Pierce has remarked elsewhere upon this movement, which occurred throughout Wales between the tenth and twelfth centuries, as "a general movement away from the scratch agriculture and semi-nomadic existence of the dark ages (the moment of change would depend on the circumstances in a given district) towards a more stable social economy which gradually gave shape to the matured native laws and institutions of the central period of the middle ages." - "Clenennau Letters and Papers", Introduction, P.vii.

convenience into parishes. As an example he takes the settlement at Mannau which "was the first step in the creation of the township of that name, an area which embraced the greater part of the parish of Llanfachraeth."¹. A settlement therefore already existed in Mannau before the advent of Cadwgan, son of Bleddyn ap Cynfyn.

The second phase dealt with is that period following the coming of the Normans when Cadwgan ap Bleddyn ap Cynfyn overran Meirionydd and appointed Uchtryd as Lord of Meirionydd. By 1256, however, the country had become a subordinate territory annexed to the Principality of the last Llywelyn - that is, the third phase. Professor Jones Pierce, from a study of

1. T. Jones Pierce, "Ancient Meirionydd", P.16.

the records drawn up by the English officials shortly after Llewelyn's death, examines the social system prevailing during this last phase. The most striking feature he discovers is the expansion of each family into "gwelygorddau" of many households. The most notable expansion is in the township of Nannau, where a "gwelygordd" of over seventy families controls the wastes or commons over a great part of the parish of Llanfachreth, and where the original "gwely" settlement has become "a sprawling mass of dispersed arable holdings", made up of over seventy "tyddynod". Then Professor Jones Pierce states what must be one of the major themes of this thesis: "One of these 'tyddynod', incidentally, was known as 'Tyddyn Llanfair' which will be replaced in the Tudor period by the mansion of Plas Nannau - the centre of a large modern estate which will in time emerge out of a concentration of 'tyddynod' belonging to the 'gwely' of 'tref' Nannau."¹.

1. T. Jones Pierce, op.cit. P.19. I am indebted to Professor Jones Pierce for the following reference to the source of his information: P.R.O. L.R.2/236 - an Elizabethan extent of the vills of Merioneth, "made at a time when the old medieval land system was already in an advanced stage of disintegration". In this survey, compiled in 1592, Hugh Nanney Esq. is recorded as occupying a messuage "vocat y place yn Nanne sive Tyddyn keaven llanvair". (P.12, dorse).

CHAPTER 11.1282 - 1402.

"Kod gwinwydd dedwydd o deidiau - mowredd

Meiric Howel Selau

Kaf vlaen had yn kyflawnhau

Koffawn ynyr kyff Nannau."

William Llŷn.

The process described at the end of the last chapter, by which the original settlers at Nannau accumulated their estates, can not be studied from documentary evidence for a further four generations. It is not until the early fifteenth century that the Nannau collection of deeds, showing the Nanneys amalgamating these various holdings, begins.

Ynyr Vychan, however, is a very important figure in the early history of the Nannau family, for his life illustrates one of the most important factors in the history of post-conquest Wales, and states the theme which future generations of his family will diligently follow. He was one of that large body of Welshmen who worked with the new

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English administration from the very beginning, thus both aiding the task of conquest and furthering their own personal ambitions.

National patriotism was really non-existent in medieval Wales. The rule of the Welsh princes had never been particularly secure, except possibly under the two Llywelyns. Even so, in 1282 Llywelyn the Last had been betrayed by his own men in the heart of his principality - in the bell tower of Bangor Cathedral. In the words of the Welsh chronicler: "ac ena y gwnaethpwyd brat lliwelyn ene clochte en mangor y gan y wyr ef ehun. ac ene yr edewyf lliwelyn ap Gruf' david y vraud en gwarchadw Gwyned. ac entev ef a haeth ae lu y goresgyn powys a buellt." ¹. The Welsh kingdom, moreover, before 1282, had been built by conquest, not of the alien English, but of fellow Welshmen; and while Llywelyn the Great and Llywelyn the Last's unification of Wales and the administrative organization of their kingdom were secure during their lifetimes, their roots went no deeper than they had been forced.

1. "Brut y Tywysogion" (Peniarth MS.20) ed. Thomas Jones, P.228.

Meirionydd itself had been a completely independent lordship until the time of Owain Gwynedd.¹ From that time until 1256 Meirionydd was still a separate lordship ruled by a vassal lord - usually a member of a cadet branch of the house of Gwynedd. And it was not until 1256 - less than thirty years before the English conquest - that the lordship was extinguished by annexation to the principality of Gwynedd, under the direct control of Llywelyn the Last. Indeed, the immediate reason for the annexation had been the action of the Lord of Meirionydd, Llywelyn Fychan, in betraying Llywelyn and siding with the English enemy.²

The medieval Welsh freeman had no tradition of patriotism and loyalty behind him. Professor Glyn Roberts has shown³ how the Glynne family of Glynllifon, the descendants of Ystrwyth ap Ednowain, who was an adviser and diplomatic agent to Llywelyn the Great, after the English conquest accepted at once the new system. They, like the Nanneys, managed to attach

1. T. Jones Pierce, "Ancient Meirionydd", *Journal Mer. Hist. Rec. Soc.*, 1949-51, p. 17.

2. *ibid.* p. 18.

3. Glyn Roberts, "The Glynnes and the Wynns of Glynllifon" *Caerns. Hist. Soc. Trans.* 1948.

themselves to the new administrators and enjoyed the consequent benefits; and "Whenever individual members of the Glynallifon family can be identified, they are invariably on the side of the conqueror and, so far as we can tell, none of them supported the various Welsh movements for independence after the Conquest."¹.

The medieval period also saw the growth of a Welsh "official" class in the Principality. From the earliest years of the Edwardian settlement much of the work of administration and of the preservation of law and order within the commotes had been done by Welshmen holding ringildries and raglotries - those commotal offices which, like the commotes themselves, had formed an important part of the native Welsh administration before 1282. The Nanneys were typical of this class; they all served in the offices of rhaglaw, rhingyll and woodward, and held other minor official posts in the commote of Talybont. A striking example of the perpetuation of the old Welsh commotal offices after the conquest was the ordinance made early in the fourteenth century for the preservation of peace and

1. Glyn Roberts, op.cit. P. 26.

order by the appointment of keepers of the peace in every commote - a return to the old Welsh system of the "cais", or "keys:"¹.

Welshmen were also, occasionally, holding the extremely important office of sheriff. The finest example of this Welsh "official" class was undoubtedly Sir Gruffydd Llwyd. He was the great grandson of Ednyfed Vychan, seneschal to Llywelyn the Last. His father and uncle had both sided with Edward 1 at the time of the English conquest of Wales, and Gruffydd himself became a member of the royal household, and served both Edward 1 and Edward 11 well.² He was the first Welshman ever to hold for any length of time the office of sheriff in the Principality - for Caernarvonshire from 1301 to 1305, Anglesey from 1305 to 1306, Caernarvonshire again from 1308 to 1310 and Merionethshire from 1314 to 1316 and from 1321 to 1327.³ In Merionethshire another Welshman - a certain Meurig Maelan - was deputy sheriff under Walter de Manny in 1347 - 8.⁴ Most of the sheriffs were English

1. W.H. Waters, "Edwardian Settlement of North Wales", P.138; "Record of Caernarvon", P.131.

2. "Bywgraffiadur", PP.299 - 300.

3. P.R.O. List of Sheriffs, PP. 136, 248, 260.

4. *ibid*, P.260; Arch. Camb. 1847, P.123.

According to *Siwnt Vychan* (N.L.W. Peniarth 74, P.68), Meurig Maelan was Ynwr Vychan's nephew.

however, and the highest offices in the Principality - that of chamberlain, for example - were held exclusively by Englishmen. It is possible, of course, that but for the Glyndŵr revolt, Welshmen would have attained high office more frequently. As it was, however, the infiltration of local men of wealth and position into the higher offices of the administration was only gradual. Their opportunity came with the weakening of the administration following the Wars of the Roses. "Englishmen continued to hold the highest offices of all, but their deputies were usually the local magnates and it was the deputies who mattered."¹ William Gruffydd of Penrhyn, for example, was deputy to John, Lord Dudley, Chamberlain of North Wales, in 1459.² Finally, with the establishment of the Tudor dynasty, the administrative offices of the Principality fell almost entirely into the hands of the Welsh magnates.

It is in this setting that we must consider the activities of the members of the Nannau family during the Middle Ages. Ynyr Vychan, Meurig Llwyd, Hywel Sele and Gruffydd Dernas, Hywel's son - Meurig Vychan - and his grandson Dafydd and great grandson Hywel, all lived

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1. W.O. Williams, "Calendar of the Caernarvonshire Quarter Sessions Records", Introduction, P.xli.
 2. H.R. Davies, "The Conway and the Menai Ferries", P.47.

and worked against this background, and were, indeed, a part of it.

In Griffith and Dwnn Ynyr Vychan is given as the only son of his father Ynyr ap Meurig. Robert Vaughan, however, places him as the first of three: "..... Ynyr Vaughan, Lord of Nanney, eldest, Meuric Hên, 2 sonne and Enion called the Brawd dy o Nanney 3 sonne, who was Chaplain to King Edward the 1st. and Bishop of St. Asaph.¹ Robert Vaughan may well be correct here. Anian 11. (d.1293)². Bishop of St. Asaph, was undoubtedly an historical figure, although it is doubtful whether he was ever Chaplain to King Edward.³

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1. R. Vaughan, "Notes on the House of Nannau", Arch. Camb. 1863. P. 130.
 2. "Bywgraffiadur", P.9.
 3. Journal of Flints. Hist. Soc. 1914 - 15. R.C. Easterling, "Anian of Nannau O.F.P.", PP.9 - 30. Miss Easterling errs in placing Nannau, Anian's supposed birthplace, as "an important 'tref' within the present parish of Llanfachreth, in the Lleya division of Carnarvonshire."

Robert Vaughan definitely places Anian (or Enion)^{1.} the Black Friar of Nannau in the Nannau pedigree. What evidence there is seems to point to Anian's having been born in Nannau and one can only presume that he would be a member of the ruling family in that district. "Powys Fadog" also states that he "was the son of Ynyr ab Meurig, Lord of Nannau, and was called "Y Brawd Dû o Nannau".^{2.} The authority for placing him as a native of Nannau is the continuation of "Brut y Tywysogion" in Peniarth MS.20: "1292 Anno y bu varw Eynnon escop llan Elwy y braud du o nannev y gelwyd ef, a goreu gwr oed achadarnaf er kynnal y escobot or aweles neb."^{3.} His life does not concern us here; it is sufficient to note that he was Bishop of St. Asaph from 1268 until his death in 1293. His was a vigorous personality which found its expression in an equally vigorous life; his episcopate was one long record of controversies and lawsuits and Edward 1, Prince Llewelyn and Archbishop Peckham all had to reckon with this forceful and combative Welsh Bishop.^{4.}

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1. Anian is a Latinization of his native name, Einion; but Einion is itself a borrowing of the Latin name Ennianus - Canon J. Fisher, Arch.Camb.1919, P.181.
 2. "Powys Fadog", Vol.1. P.173, n.1.
 3. "Brut y Tywysogion", Peniarth MS.20.ed. T. Jones, P.229.
 4. His life is dealt with in the following: D.N.B. Vol.1. P.438 under "de Schenow" (a scribe's blunder); "Bywgraffiadur", PP.9-11, Archdeacon Thomas, "History of the Diocese of St. Asaph", Vol.1. PP.41-6; R.C. Easterling, op.cit.; his will is published in Arch. Camb. 1919, PP.181-7 and a note on his career appears in "Powys Fadog", Vol.1. P.173.

In his will¹ there are two references to a certain "Adam de Nannau" whom he refers to as his brother. Whether this is a reference to another member of the Nanney family, or simply a "brother in God" who also came from Nannau, is difficult to say. It is possible that they were the two Dominican friars, Adam and Anian, who were among the witnesses to the grant of lands by Llywelyn the Great to the Priory of Penmon in 1237.² There is a letter extant from Peckham addressed to this Adam, dated December 1282, reproaching him for his tardiness in returning from a mission to Llywelyn with which he had been entrusted.³ In 1284 it is recorded that a certain Adam was prior of the Friars Preachers of Bangor; possibly, in view of the dating, this was "Adam de Nannau".⁴ What evidence there is seems to favour as much the inclusion of Adam as that of Anian, although Robert Vaughan excludes the former from the pedigree.

1. Arch. Camb. 1919. P.181 ff.

2. Cal. Charter Rolls, Vol.11. PP.459 - 460.

3. "Registrum Epistolarum Johannis Peckham", Vol.11. P.488.

4. J.G.Edwards, "Littere Wallie", P.76, No.143.

The other son of Ynyr ap Meurig was Meurig Hên, father of the poet Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hên, author of the elegy on Llencu Llwyd, and uncle to Meurig Llwyd.¹ Meurig Hên is himself reputed to have been a poet.²

The first we hear of Ynyr Vychan is in 1305 when, as one of the Petitioners at Kennington, Enyr Vaughan, of the County of Merioneth, claimed that the Lord King granted him the r-aglotry of the commote of Talybont for his service, without any rent or rendering from him, because he captured Madoc ap Llewelyn who made himself Prince of Wales in the last war and had delivered him to the Lord King; and the Justice of North Wales was now demanding from him four pounds rent annually for that office.³

Thus in the first really serious revolt after the Conquest, Ynyr Vychan sided with the English conqueror. He claims to have captured Madoc, the leader of the rebellion of 1294 - 5.

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1. E.D. Jones "The Family of Nannau", Journal Mer.Hist. Rec.Soc., 1953, P.8; "Cywyddau Dafydd ap Iwilym a'i Gyfoeswyr", pp.xcvi-c.
 2. Idris Vychan, "Hanes Dolgellau a'r Cynyddogaethau ynghyd â Hynafiaethau Gorllewin Meirionydd." P.47.
 3. "Record of Caernarvon", P.220.

There seems little reason to doubt the truth of this claim, especially when we remember that Madoc himself was Lord of Meirionydd and was a native of the county.^{1.} In any case Merionethshire, and especially the castles of Harlech and Criccieth, played a prominent part in the revolt.² Above all, it is significant that when Madoc fled to the hills after the overwhelming defeat of his forces at Maes Moydog on the 5th. March, 1295, the search for him during March and April centred around Merionethshire.^{3.} Reginald de Grey of Ruthin, who was in charge of the hunt, reported to the King that Madoc had been located in a wood in the strongest place in the whole of Arduwy, and that steps were being taken to fell the trees in an attempt to reduce this position.^{4.} The fugitive escaped however, and the hunt continued. The King had, meanwhile, offered a reward of five hundred marks to anyone who would capture the rebel, alive or dead. Ynyr Vychan, as we have seen, claimed to have done so. Whether he did capture Madoc and receive the reward is not clear.

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1. J.G. Edwards, "Madog ap Llewelyn", B.B.C.S., 1948-50, P.P. 207 - 210.
 2. J. Griffiths, "Documents Relating to the Rebellion of Madoc, 1294-5", B.B.C.S., 1935-7. P.147 ff.
 3. J. Griffiths, "The Revolt of Madog ap Llywelyn, 1294-5", Caerns.Hist.Soc. Trans., 1955. P.20.
 4. J.G. Edwards, "Calendar of Ancient Correspondence Concerning Wales", PP.108-9.

All that we know is that Madoc, in the end, either surrendered or was handed over to John de Havering on the 31st. July or sometime during the first week in August.^{1.}

It is not recorded whether or not Ynyr Vychan did receive the raglotry of Talybont at that time^{2.} but the reply to his petition does not necessarily preclude such a tenure. The reply is that John de Havering has testified that he has no charter or other title to that raglotry let for a rent by the King.^{3.} In other words, while Ynyr Vychan may have been granted the office, John de Havering, as Justice of all Wales and as the man appointed after the restoration of order in 1295 as Justice of North Wales^{4.}, has no record of such a grant for rent. That is to say, the present Justice of North Wales was in the wrong in demanding the rent and Ynyr Vychan was exonerated.

1. J. Griffiths, "The Revolt of Madog ap Llywelyn", P.22.

2. There is no extant Ministers' Account for 1294-5 as many of the Exchequer records of North Wales were burnt in this rebellion - (W.H. Waters, "The Edwardian Settlement". P.15.)

3. "Record of Caernarvon", P.220.

4. W.H. Waters, op.cit. P.13.

It does not necessarily mean that Ynyr Vychan was not rhaglaw of Talybont. W.H.Waters, however, asserts that de Havering does deny that Ynyr Vychan had received the office. He states that "in 1305, when a Welshman claimed to have received a rhaglawry in Merionethshire by grant of Edward 1., Jehn Havering was able, authoritatively, to deny the validity of such a claim.¹" This may be so, but is it not possible, from the wording of the reply, to take its meaning to be a rejection of the claim for rent? In any case, the rejection is of the claim to the office of rhaglaw and not of the claim to the honour of capturing Madoc. The very fact that Ynyr Vychan claims so to have done and received a reward is also an indication of the direction in which his sympathies lay.

Moreover, Ynyr Vychan, or at least an Eynghon Vagghan is named in the Sheriff's Account for Merioneth for 1303/4 as rhaglaw of Talybont. ².

1. W.H. Waters, op.cit. P.32.

2. P.R.O. Min. Acc. SC 6/1231/2.

In the following year the same person now referred to by the English scribe as Eynghner Vaghan, is recorded as rhaglaw of Talybont¹, and this same person, later referred to as Ener Vachan, retains the raglotry of Talybont until 1329/30², presumably the year of his death as the next occupant of that office is a Meuric Vachan³, the son and heir of Ynyr. Throughout his tenure of this office, Ynyr is recorded as paying £4. each year "de firma pro balliva sua", except for 1322 and 1329/30⁴ when all he pays is forty shillings.

The next we hear of Ynyr Vychan after the reference to the capture of Madoc is of his doing homage and fealty to the first English Prince of Wales in 1301.⁵

1. P.R.O. Min. Acc. SC6/1231/3.

2. SC6/1231/4; SC6/1231/5; SC6/1231/7;
SC6/1231/8; SC6/1231/9; SC6/1231/10;
SC6/1231/11; SC6/1231/12; SC6/1232/1;
SC6/1232/2; SC6/1232/3; SC6/1232/4;
SC6/1232/5.

3. SC6/1232/6.

4. SC6/1232/2; SC6/1232/5.

5. Edward Owen, "A List of those who did Homage and Fealty to the First English Prince of Wales in A.D. 1301.;" Cal. Pat. Rolls, 18 Edward III. P.227 ff.

His name appears in the list drawn up on Edward 111's instructions, in 1344, of those "magnates" and "communitates" who did homage to the newly created Prince of Wales on and following his arrival at Chester in April 1301. This list gives us the names of the principal men of North Wales in that year. Ynyr Vychan, here referred to as Ener Vaghan, was one of three who did homage and fealty on the 28. April at Conway.^{1.} All three came from the Nannau district.^{2.}

The only other reference to Ynyr Vychan is to be found in a petition by John de Grey of Ruthin. He complained that a group of men from Merionethshire, including Ynyr Vychan, assembled "par l'envoy Mons. Griffith ap Rees" and proceeded to the town of Ruthin on the Wednesday before the feast of St. Gregory, 1322. There they attacked Grey's castle and began to burn the town of Ruthin, and destroyed the houses of Blethyn ap

1. Cal. Pat. Rolls, 18 Edward 111, P.231.

2. Edward Owen, op.cit. The other two were Eynon Vaghan ab Maddock and David ab Guen; the latter is referred to in the "Record of Caernarvon", P.278, as holder of a "gavael" in Llanwenwyn.

Heylin and Jenkyn le Messer, "issi Que tote la vyle
ust estee ars si ens ne ussent este destourbee". They
robbed the men of his township and the surrounding
countryside, and killed two of his gentlemen - John
"Soun" Parker and Richard de Faryntone - and injured
almost forty others "tam qe a la mort". They
wrecked his parks and drove away his wild and domestic
animals and his entire stud, and they carried away the
goods and chattels of his tenants to the value of £80,
as well as those chattels which were in the mill.
Altogether they are accused of robbing and destroying
the countryside to the extent of £1,000. John de Grey
desired a remedy for himself and his tenants from the
King. The King's reply was to order the Justice of North
Wales to inquire into the contents of the petition
according to the laws and customs of those parts.^{1.}

There are two very interesting points connected
with this petition. In the first place the men were
sent "par l'envoy de Mons. Griffith ap Rees." The
other factor is the chronology of these events.

1. Rot. Parl., Vol.1. P.397.

Professor J.G. Edwards^{1.} has shown that the Griffith ap Ieues of North Wales whose name is found in the records of Edward 11's reign is the Sir Gruffydd Llwyd who, according to the traditional account, having co-operated willingly at first with the English conqueror, yet grew disgusted with their oppression, tried to negotiate an alliance with Edward Bruce in Ireland and eventually rose in revolt in 1322 - a revolt which ended in failure and Llwyd's imprisonment at Rhuddlan. Professor J.G. Edwards has proved that whereas the first part of this tradition - the friendliness he showed towards the English - is correct, there was no revolt in 1322 but rather a continuation of the pro-English policy. When Edward 11, in the winter of 1321-2, counter-attacked his baronial enemies with such vigour and success, Sir Gruffydd Llwyd, leading a band of men from North Wales, joined the fray. He joined, however, on the side of the King. Gruffydd, indeed "so far from being a rebel, was the leader of the Royalist party among the Welsh of North Wales."^{2.}

1. J.G. Edwards, "Sir Gruffydd Llwyd", E.H.R. 1915 P.589 ff.

2. J.G. Edwards, op.cit. P.592.

Having been appointed in November 1321 to levy forces in North Wales to suppress any insurrections there, on the 30th. he was ordered to come to the King with his troops. It was, therefore, on the King's orders that Sir Gruffydd Llwyd and his Welshmen came down from the hills and joined the attacks on the castles of Holt, Chirk and Welshpool. Gruffydd, indeed, was formally appointed, with two others, to receive custody of the castles of Chirk and Welshpool in the King's name. The importance of ^{Gruffydd} Llwyd's operations at this period was the effect they had on baronial opposition in the Welsh Marches. In this lies largely the explanation of the collapse of that opposition. "The explanation is to be found largely in the fact that they had to face a simultaneous attack from the King on one flank and from Gruffydd Llwyd's Welshmen on the other."¹ Sir Gruffydd Llwyd's capture of Chirk Castle struck directly at the centre of Mortimer's powers

The other interesting point in this petition, to be considered together with the identification of Griffith ap Rees, is the chronology of the attack mentioned in the petition.

1. J.G. Edwards, op.cit. P.594.

This attack is supposed to have taken place on the Wednesday immediately preceeding the feast of St. Gregory 1322. It would seem that this attack, instigated one supposes by Gruffydd Llwyd, was but one small link in the chain which ended at the battle of Borough bridge.

The general political background to this royal success is the story of a most surprising royal recovery. Within two months of the victory of Lancaster's "party", expressed in the banishment of the Despensers, Edward 11 was able to take advantage of a re-alignment of forces within the baronial ranks and especially of the insult offered to the Queen by the wife of Bartholomew de Badlesmere. Knowing that Badlesmere was estranged from Lancaster and could expect no help from that quarter, Edward 11 appealed for help against this insulter of the Queen's majesty. The response was so great that Edward was joined by many of the magnates who had recently been Badlesmere's closest allies.¹ The King took advantage of the surprisingly large and powerful forces at his command not only to avenge the insult of the Badlesmeres but also to attack the main body of the

1. T.F. Tout, "The Place of the Reign of Edward 11 in English History". P. 147.

baronial opposition in the Marches of Wales under Hereford and the Mortimers. In this he was completely successful, aided as we have seen by the activities of Sir Gruffydd Llwyd and his Welshmen. Having subdued the Welsh March, the King turned north to seek out Lancaster. Lancaster fled, but his escape was blocked just north of Boroughbridge on the 16th. March, 1322, by Sir Andrew Harclay and he lost the ensuing battle.¹ Thus Edward 11 reigned supreme -- for a while at least. That this had become possible was due mainly to the disunion of the barons and the attack of ^{Gruffydd} Llwyd on the Welsh Marches.

It is in relation to such general developments that we must view this raid in which Ynyr Vychan took part. To see it in perspective we should consider the chronology in more detail. In Michaelmas 1321, Sir Gruffydd Llwyd was appointed Sheriff of Merioneth.² Early in November, 1321, he was ordered to levy troops in North Wales to suppress any insurrections, and on the 30th. of that month he was ordered to proceed with his troops to the King.³

1. T.F.Tout, "The Place of the Reign of Edward 11. in English History." P.148.

2. P.R.O. List of Sheriffs.P.260.
He continued in this office until Michaelmas 1325.

3. J.G. Edwards, op.cit. P.593.

Meanwhile in October 1321 the King had begun the siege of Bartholomew de Badlesmere's castle at Leeds in Kent¹. and in November had sent a force to seize the other castles of Bartholomew and other of the baronial opponents.² Then in December³. Edward, having seized the baronial strongholds in the east, "he made ready to do the same in the West..... For it was there that the barons had their safest refuge, and it was difficult for the King to penetrate it without a strong force."⁴ This strong force was supplied largely by Sir Gruffydd Llwyd and his followers, who on the 16th. January received the custody in the King's name of Welshpool castle.⁵ Within two days Gruffydd received the custody of Chirk Castle.⁶ On the 14th. February Gruffydd Llwyd was ordered to raise and lead troops to join the Scottish expedition.⁷

1. "Vita Edwardi Secundi", ed. N. Denholm-Young, P. 116, N.2.

2. *ibid.* P. 117. n.1.

3. *ibid.* P. 117. n.2.

4. *ibid.* P. 117.

5. Cal. Pat. Rolls. 1322. P. 49.

6. *ibid.* P. 49.

7. J.G. Edwards, *op.cit.* P. 593.

The next we hear is that on the Wednesday immediately preceding the 12th. March 1322, Ynyr Vychan and other Merioneth men are sent on this raid by a "Mons. Griffith ap Rees" who must by all the canons of probability be Sir Gruffydd Llwyd - at that time Sheriff of Merionethshire. This action seems to have followed either at the end or in the wake of the royal victory in the Welsh Marches, for on the 16th. March 1322 occurred the royal victory at Boroughbridge; although it was not until the 27th. May that Sir Gruffydd Llwyd received the custody of Holt Castle in the King's name.^{1.}

The royalist activities in the Welsh March would therefore seem to have continued while the royal forces were driving northwards and even after the fall of Lancaster. The appearance of a "Mons. Griffith ap Rees" in Grey's petition, together with the chronology of the events of that time, are surely sufficient proof of the connection of this attack on John de Grey and the castle at Ruthin with the other activities of Sir Gruffydd Llwyd and his Welshmen during the royalist revival of 1321-2.

1. Cal. Pat. Rolls. 1322. P. 122.

The coincidence of nomenclature and chronology is strengthened by the fact that during the period when Ynyr Vychan held the post of rhaglaw of Merioneth¹. Sir Gruffydd Llwyd twice held the office of Sheriff of that County. The first instance when they served together in the King's service was in 1315/16². The other was in 1321/2³, the year of the raid on Ruthin, and their co-operation in this official capacity continued until Michaelmas 1328.⁴

There is one difficulty, however, which prevents any complete understanding of the purpose of this raid and its place in the pattern of events. John de Grey of Wilton and Ruthin does not appear to have been particularly active against the King. From the account of his life given in the "Complete Peerage"⁵; indeed, his career would seem to have been more "pro" than "Anti" royalist.

1. Supra, P.32.

2. P.R.O., SC6/1231/9; SC6/1231/10;
P.R.O., List of Sheriffs, P.260 - from Michaelmas 1315 to May 1317.

3. P.R.O. SC6/1232/1.

4. P.R.O. "List of Sheriffs", P.260. Breese, "Kalendars of Gwynedd", P.68 gives this date as Michaelmas 1327.

5. "Complete Peerage", Vol.VI. P. 173.

He was one of the English barons who were present at the battle of Bannockburn on the 24th. June, 1314.^{1.} On the 19th. February 1314/15 he was appointed Justiciar of North Wales and keeper of the King's castles and lands in those parts^{2.}; his successor in that office was Roger Mortimer of Chirk. He was summoned for military service from the 21st. June 1308 to the 3rd. April, 1323; to the Councils from the 8th. January 1308/9 to the 30th. May 1324; and to Parliaments from the 4th. March 1308/9 to the 18th. September, 1322. . He accompanied the King to France in June 1320 and to Scotland in August 1322.^{3.} He would seem from this account to have been "a good and faithful servant" to his Lord the King until his death in October 1323.

In this account there seems to be no warrant whatsoever for an attack on the King's behalf by Gruffydd Llwyd's Welshmen - unless of course, by a momentary aberration, Grey had decided in the winter of 1321-2

1. The "Monk of Malmesbury" states that Lancaster, Warenne, Arundel and Warwick did not come - "Vita Edwardi Secundi", P. 50.

2. "Complete Peerage". Vol.VI. P. 174.

3. "Complete Peerage". Vol.VI. P.174.

to join Mortimer, but had returned to the royalist fold by the August of that year. This seems most unlikely, as does the theory that his castle was in the hands of Lancaster at the time. If this were so, surely Grey would not complain of an attack made upon it by the King's Welsh allies? This explanation is true of the capture of Holt Castle - on the 27th. May 1322 that castle was surrendered to John de Warenne, Griffin ap Rees and Giles de Bello Campo, together with all the lands of Bromfield and Yale, which Thomas of Lancaster "held for life of the demise of the said earl of Surrey."¹ The reason for the attack on Welshpool castle is also obvious, for in 1322 it was held by John Cherleton who, although he had previously been held in great esteem by Edward 11, in particular as Chamberlain, yet joined the rebellion of Thomas of Lancaster in 1321-2, for which he was pardoned on the 11th. September, 1322.²

There is no such satisfactory explanation of this attack on Ruthin, however. Grey is not listed in the "Complete Peerage" account as one of the Lords Ordainer.

1. Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1322. P. 122.

2. "Complete Peerage", Vol. 111. P. 160.

But there are two references in contemporary chronicles to a John De Grey who is one of these Ordainers. In the "Annales Londonien - se" a "Johan de Grei" is included in a list of the Ordainers, dated the 17th. March 1310.¹ And in "Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvon" a "Johannes de Grey" is included among the names of the Ordainers elected in March 1310.² In this same chronicle, however, a "Johannes de Grey" is mentioned as one of the barons killed at Bannockburn.³ This suggests either that the author of the chronicle is incorrect in his statement, or that there was more than one John de Grey among the English baronage at this time. The former seems the more plausible, as there is no John de Grey given in the "Complete Peerage" whose death is recorded at Bannockburn.

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1. "Annales Londoniense de Tempore Edwardi Secundi", in "Chronicles of the Reign of Edward 1. and Edward 11", ed. Stubbs, Vol. 1. P. 170.
 2. "Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvon, Auctore Bridlingtoniensi" in "Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward 1. and Edward 11", Vol. 11. P. 37.
 3. *ibid.* P. 46.

There is a reference to a John Grey as one of four barons included among the members of the standing council appointed by the Treaty of Leake to remain with the King.¹ Since "the triumph of the middle party was assured by the treaty of Leake"² and in view of the facts of his career as given in the "Complete Peerage", it would seem reasonable to suggest that at the most Grey was a member of the middle party. Even if he was, as is suggested by the references in the chronicles, one of the Lords Ordainers, this does not necessarily mean he was a rabid anti-royalist, for varying shades of opinion were represented in the Ordainers, excepting only the most thorough partisans of the King.

The motives behind the attack must therefore remain obscure. If we are correct in our assumption that Inyr Vychan was implementing the orders of Sir Gruffydd Llwyd, who was himself carrying out the decrees of the King, he cannot have been influenced by his

1. T.F. Tout, "The Place of the Reign of Edward 11 in English History", P. 122, n.

2. *ibid.* P. 121.

marriage to Janet, the daughter of Roger Mortimer of Chirk, the leader of the anti-royalist faction in the northern Marches of Wales.¹ He was influenced, we may suppose, by his official relationship to Sir Gruffydd Llwyd, and by his own desire to work with and for the English Crown.

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1. Dwnn. P. 84. His is the only reference to this Janet - as his first wife. He gives the second wife as Gwenhwyfar, daughter of Gruffydd ap Goronwy ap Einion ap Siesyllt. Elsewhere (P.226) he omits this first wife and gives Ynyr's wife as Gwenhwyfar. Her ancestry includes in this instance an extra generation - daughter of Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn ap Gronwy ap Einion ap Siesyllt. Both Griffith and "Llyfr Silyn" agree with Dwnn's second version - a daughter of Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn ap Goronwy ap Einion ap Siesyllt. According to "Llyfr Silyn" (P.214) the woman in question was Gwenhwyfar, but Griffith in the Nannau pedigree (P.200) gives her name as Gwenllian. In another pedigree however, - that of Hengwrt (P.201)- Griffith gives the wife of Ynyr Vychan as Gwenhwyfar and adds a note: "in some books Gwenllian."

The next in the main line of descent, Meurig Vychan, followed his father's example in co-operating with the new administration. Inyr Vychan relinquished the office of rhaglaw of Talybont in 1329/30.¹ In the Ministers' Account for 1331/2, the rhaglaw of Talybont is Meurig Vychan². In the Account for 1332/3³, he is called Meuric Vachan ap Ener, so there can be no doubt as to his identity. He continued to hold this office until 1339/40.⁴ As in his father's time, the farm of this office was worth £4. In this connection should be noted the grant on 4th. June 1338 to Meurye ap Evyr Vachan of "the bailiwick of the rhaglawry of Talepont and the town of Dolgelley in North Wales, to hold for ten years, rendering yearly at the Exchequer of Kaernarvon as much as others hitherto; having found before the king in Chancery, as mainpernors for his

1. P.R.O. SC6/1232/5.

2. P.R.O. SC6/1232/6.

3. P.R.O. SC6/1232/7.

4. P.R.O. SC6/1232/8; SC6/1232/9; SC6/1232/10;

. SC6/1232/11.

rendering of the said form, Walter de Manny 'chivaler' and Robert de Ellerton." ¹.

Apart from this, very little is known about Meurig Vychan ap Ynyr. His effigy lies in Dolgelley Parish Church and forms the sill of the easternmost window of the north aisle. The inscription reads: "Hic jacet Meuric filius Ynyr Vychan." ². According to Robert Vaughan, Meurig Vychan was the first of six sons of Ynyr Vychan and on the division of his father's inheritance, Meurig received the "Pallace" and the lands from thence to the river at Mouthech." ³.

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1. Cal. Fine Rolls, Vol.V, 1337-1347, P.83.
Walter de Manny had been appointed Sheriff of Merioneth for life in 1332. In 1341 he was nominated as temporary controller of the Chamberlain of Caernarvon and in October of the same year Edward III granted the whole of his rights in Merionethshire to Walter Manny in payment of a debt. (W.H. Waters, "Edwardian Settlement", PP. 74, 75-6, 84).
 2. "Inventory of Ancient Monuments", Merioneth, P. 24.
There is a sketch of this effigy facing P. 24, Fig. 55.
 3. R. Vaughan, "Notes on the House of Nannau", Arch. Camb. 1863, P. 130.

There was a "Meirico Vouccan" among the garrison of Bere to whom, on the 22nd. April, 1283, William de Valence and Roger Lestrangle promised £80. for the surrender of the castle.¹ As Dr. Thomas Richards states², it is difficult to believe that this was the Meurig Vychan of the Nannau pedigree. It would be far from easy to fit him in chronologically, for even if we suppose that he ceased to be rhaglaw of Talybont in 1339/40 on his death,³ and that he would be at least between the ages of fifteen and twenty in 1283 as a member of the garrison, this would make him between seventy five and eighty years of age on his death. Moreover, if we suppose that Meurig Vychan was only twenty years old in 1283, he was born in 1263, and this would mean that his father was born at the latest about 1245. Since we have seen⁴ that Ynyr Vychan was

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1. J.G. Edwards "Littere Wallie", No. 325, P.189.
 2. "Bywgraffiadur", P. 640.
 3. T.P.Ellis, in "Dolgelley and Llanelltyd", P.34, gives the date of his death as 1350, but gives no authority for this statement. Neither does he give his authority for stating that Meurig Vychan was "famous for his somewhat extravagant hospitality" (P.34), although he has possibly confused this Meurig Vychan with the son of Hywel Sele of the same name who was the subject of several bardic poems of thanks for his hospitality - vide E.D.Jones, op.cit. P.10; infra P.93.
 4. Supra P.31. ; P.R.O. SC6/1232/5.