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district of Erging, known to the English by the name of Arch-enfield. Erging was bounded by the Wye, the Worm and the Monnow; though so close to the gates of Hereford, it was a stronghold of Welsh customs and ideas as late as the end of the twelfth century. The Welsh saints were honoured throughout the district, and among them St. David had a great church at Much Dewchurch,<sup>285</sup> and Dyfrig, who was (if we may believe his legend) by birth and residence a man of Erging, a group of churches which commanded the allegiance of the dwellers along the winding banks of the Wye.<sup>286</sup>

#### AUTHORITIES FOR EARLY WELSH TOPOGRAPHY.

##### I. LISTS OF CANTREFS AND COMMOTES.

Four lists of the cantrefs and commotes of Wales are to be found in MS., representing the work of four editors or compilers. The oldest is probably that contained in Cottonian MS. Domitian viii. ff. 119-20b (printed, not very accurately, in Leland's *Itinerary*, ed. 1769, v. 16-20), for, though the writing is said to be of the fifteenth century, the forms of the names imply an original of the twelfth or thirteenth (*Cymr.* xi. 168). Next comes the list in the Red Book of Hergest, cols. 377-80, written about 1400 and printed, first in the *Myvyrian Archaiology*, II. 606-12 (737-40), where it is printed on the lower half of the page, and more recently by Rhys and Evans in *Bruts*, 407-12. A third list occurs in Hengwrt MS. 34 = Peniarth MS. 50 (Y Cwta Cyfarwydd), pp. 133-8, written about 1450 and printed in *Cymr.* ix. 326-31. The fourth is in Hengwrt MS. 352 = Peniarth MS. 163, pp. 57-60, and was transcribed by Gruffydd Hiraethog in the year 1543; it will be found in full in Evans, *Rep.* i. p. 952-54. The upper list in the *Myvyrian Archaiology* (II. 606-13 (735-7)) is substantially that of Gruffydd Hiraethog.

Not one of these lists can be implicitly trusted, though they go far to correct each other's errors. The Cottonian list is defective in the section Ceredigion and throughout is atrociously spelt, but in other respects it is fairly accurate. Its order is—Y Berfeddwlad, Powys (including Arwystli), Gwynedd (including Penllyn), Rhwng Gwy a Hafren, Deheubarth, Morgannwg. The chief mistakes are the misplacement of Nant Conwy, the transposition of Uwch and Is Rhaeadr (this runs through all the lists save that of Gruffydd Hiraethog), the omission of Buellt and serious confusion in Gwynllwg and Gwent. The Red Book list follows the order—Y Berfeddwlad, Gwynedd (including Penllyn, Cyfeiliog, and other border districts), Powys (including Arwystli), Rhwng Gwy a Hafren, Deheubarth, Morgannwg. In the North Wales portion there are many errors, but the Dyfed and Ystrad Tywi sections are almost flawless. The older Peniarth list follows the same order as Dom. viii. but places Arwystli at the end of Gwynedd; its chief defect is wrong bracketing, which extends to nearly every section. Morgannwg, where it was written, naturally shows the fewest blunders. Gruffydd Hiraethog's order is his own, *viz.*, Gwynedd (including Arwystli and Penllyn), Powys, Rhwng Gwy a Hafren, Deheubarth, with Morgannwg and Gwent sandwiched between Brycheiniog and Dyfed. This list professes to be based on a

<sup>285</sup> Rees, *Welsh SS.* 53.

<sup>286</sup> Chap. v. note 114.

survey (y messwryd ac i rranwyd ac i rivwyd) of all Wales made by Llywelyn ap Gruffydd (*ob.* 1282), who, however, was never in a position, despite the extent of his rule between 1267 and 1277, to make any survey of the kind. It is full of inaccuracies, such as those which mark the treatment of Cantref Bychan and Cantref Mawr, and names many commotes, such as Penal, Hafren and Trefdraeth, which had no real existence. Its unsupported evidence is of the very slightest value.

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## II. BOUNDARIES OF CANTREFS AND COMMOTES.

Really ancient evidence on this head is most difficult to obtain, but there was so much continuity in the matter of local divisions, notwithstanding political changes, that late authorities may often be used with advantage. In many parts of Wales the rural deaneries corresponded closely to the civil areas, and assistance may therefore be derived from *Tax. Nich.* 272-94. The survey printed in *Rec. Carn.* 1-89 is arranged under commotes, so that for the counties of Anglesey and Carnarvon our information is pretty full. Modern hundreds and manors often preserve the ancient boundaries; for a list of the former and their constituent elements, see *App. Land Com.* 362-76, and for particulars as to crown, episcopal and private manors, *ibid.* 437-75. Hengwrt MS. 99 = Peniarth MS. 147, written about 1566, contains (pp. 5-22) a list of parishes (printed in Evans, *Rep.* i. pp. 911-20), grouped to a large extent under the old territorial names, but the scheme is only partially carried out and not always quite correctly. Special sources of information for particular districts are indicated in the footnotes to this chapter.

## III. MAPS.

No ancient map of the cantrefs and commotes of Wales is known to me. That of William Owen (Pughe), published in 1788 in the third edition of Warington's *History of Wales*, is very largely guess-work of a clumsy kind, and it is to be regretted that the authors of *The Welsh People* should have given it a place in their book.

### NOTE TO CHAPTER VIII.—*Rheinwg, Eryllwg and Fferyllwg.*

That names of districts might be formed in Welsh by the addition of -wg to personal names is clear from the well-established cases of Morgannwg, Gwynllwg (for Gwynllyw—wg) and Seisyllwg. An instance is to be found in *Hist. Britt.* c. 70, where mention is made of a region styled "Cinlipiuc," of unknown situation, but certainly named after some Cunalipi (*Arch. Camb.* IV. xiii. (1882), 163-4) or Cynllib. The cases of Rheinwg, Eryllwg and Fferyllwg, nevertheless, present in one way or another no small difficulty. The clearest indication of the position of Rheinwg is to be found in the life of St. Padarn in Vesp. A. xiv., in which a tripartite division of South Wales between Padarn, Teilo and Dewi is said to have been made; Padarn took Seisyllwg, Teilo Morgannwg—"regnum autem Rein hec predicta iura ab episcopatu Sancti David accepit" (*Cambro-Br.* SS. 196-7). St. David's domain can have been none other than Dyfed, and as the pedigrees show that Rhain (in Old Welsh, Regin) ap Cadwgan, Seisyll ap Clydog, and Morgan ab Athrws ruled over Dyfed, Ceredigion and Glywysing respectively about the beginning of the eighth century, the three names appear to fit easily, on this explanation, into their places. They are also found in conjunction in Pen. MS. 32 (MS. D. of the *Welsh Laws*), where they appear to be intended to explain what was meant by Deheubarth (*LL.* ii. 50). Rheinwg is, therefore, taken to be Dyfed by Basil Jones (*Vestiges of the Gael*, pp. 61-2) and Phillimore (*Cymr.* xi. 141). Some other passages which might be cited do not so easily lend themselves to this conclusion; for instance, the

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"Vastatio Rienuch ab Offa" of *Ann. Camb.* MS. C. s.a. 795 and the allusions in *Cambro-Br.* SS. 77, 79, to attacks on Glamorgan by kings of "Reinuc". Aneurin Owen was probably led by these references to suppose a connection with Rhain Dremrudd, son of Brychan, and hence his gloss to Reinwg in *LL.* ii. 50, note b, "a district in Brecknockshire". For this view there is something to be said; the notion that "Ereinwg" was the Welsh name for Southern Herefordshire has, on the other hand, nothing to support it. It was first put forward by Humphrey Llwyd (*Comment.* (2), 94) and popularised by Camden (*Britannia*, 550); in all likelihood it owes its origin to the Offa passage quoted above.

Esyllwg, there can be little doubt, is an antiquaries' form, having no genuine root in history. Welshmen did not give to their territories the names of women; moreover, the only Esyllt who appears in Welsh records is the famous Iseult of romance. Those who used the name claimed, in fact, a different origin for it, which, in the light of modern philology, has only to be stated to be promptly dismissed; they regarded it as the Welsh equivalent of Siluria! Its real source, as can easily be shown, was a misunderstanding of Seisyllwg. This name having become obsolete and its application forgotten, the passage in the *Laws* (already mentioned) in which it occurs became corrupt (*cf.* *LL.* ii. 50, 584, *Comment.* (2), 169, and *Iolo MSS.* 74). Humphrey Llwyd found the form "Syllwc" in some MS. and forthwith leapt to the conclusion that the region meant was that of the Silures (*Comment.* (2), 102). The view gained acceptance and "Esyllwg" (the reading of some copies) found its way as a supposed ancient name for Morgannwg into the third series of Triads (Nos. 14, 16, 37) and the notices printed in the *Iolo MSS.* (86). *Camb. Reg.* ii. 8 contains a tremendous list of alleged variants of Esyllwg (land) and Esyllwyr (people); like other lists in the same article, it is the coinage of the ingenious and original contributor.

Fferyllwg is another form open to the gravest suspicion. Fferyll or Fferyllt is the Welsh mediæval name of the poet Vergil, and, owing to the bard's reputation in the Middle Ages as a necromancer, became a common noun, denoting an alchemist (whence the modern "fferylliaeth," chemistry) or worker in metal (*Mots Latins*, pp. 167-8; *W. Ph.* (2), 205). But no character in Welsh history bears the name, and there is no early instance of the use of Fferyllwg to denote "Rhwing Gwy a Hafren" (*Iolo MSS.* 86). I believe the origin of the form is to be found in the old name of Hereford which appears as Fernleg (Camden, *Britannia*, 553), Ferleg (*Comment.* (2), 94) and Fferleia (*Radnorsh.* (2), 108). This became Ferlex (*Camb. Reg.* i. 57; *Breconsh.* (2), p. 36); Fferregs (*Breconsh.* (2), p. 38), and, when written by Welshmen, Fferyllwg (*Gw. Brut.* s.a. 838).