

“The First Writer in the Welsh Language”: Walter Map’s Reception in Nineteenth-Century Wales

When the twelfth-century cleric Walter Map composed the *Disuassio Valerii ad Rufinum ne uxorem ducat*, an anti-matrimonial tract that would become his most popular work, he chose to use a pseudonym, Valerius.¹ He adopted the persona of an ancient Roman because he believed that otherwise the fickle public, preferring antiquity over talent, would have scorned him as a modern. “My only fault,” he claimed, “is that I live; yet I do not intend to remedy that by dying.”² All Walter could do was wait patiently in the hope that at some distant day in the future, he too would be considered part of antiquity, and that would gain him respect: “When I have begun to rot, my book will begin to gain savor, my decease will cover all its defects, and in the remotest generations my ancientness will gain me dignity: for then, as now, old copper will be of more account than new gold.”³ As Walter predicted, dying did work wonders for his literary career, but not as he had suspected. It was not his work that became famous, but his name. Just as Walter had used the name Valerius to win the goodwill of his readers, subsequent authors and scribes attached Walter’s name to a wide variety of texts as a mark of *auctoritas*. In the early-thirteenth century, only a decade or so after his death, he became—depending on which version one consults—the author, translator, or discoverer of significant portions of the *Lancelot-Grail Cycle*, one of the greatest works of Arthurian literature.⁴ His name also became attached to a

¹ Walter Map, *De nugis curialium: Courtiers’ Trifles*, ed. and trans. M. R. James, rev. C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 279-315, hereafter cited as *DNC*. Translations are my own. The best edition, however, is found in *De Nugis Curialium in Jankyn’s Book of Wikked Wyves*, ed. Ralph Hanna III and Traugott Lawler, Volume 1: The Primary Texts (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 121-48.

² “*Hoc solum deliqui, quod uiuo. Verumptamen hoc morte mea corrigere consilium non habeo*” (*DNC*, iv.5, 312-3).

³ “*Cum enim putuerim, tum primo sal accipiet, totusque sibi supplebitur decessu meo defectus, et in remotissima posteritate michi faciet auctoritatem antiquitas, quia tunc ut nunc uetustum cuprum preferetur auro nouello*” (*DNC*, iv.5, p. 312-3).

⁴ See Joshua Byron Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain: How a Careless Cleric became an Arthurian Author* (forthcoming).

large body of satirical poetry known as Goliardic verse.⁵ It is this Walter Map, ferociously sharp-tongued, that appears in Alfred Lord Tennyson's 1884 play *Becket*. Walter's pseudepigrapha overshadowed his genuine work, almost all of which is contained in the collection titled *De nugis curialium*, until well into the twentieth century.⁶ This article concerns yet another fascinating instance of Walter Map's posthumous fame, which has received almost no attention at all in scholarship on Walter: his career as one of the greatest Welsh writers in history.⁷

In nineteenth-century scholarship, particularly from Wales, it is not uncommon to find references to Walter as the son of Fflur, a Welsh princess of Glamorgan, and Blondel de Mapes, a Norman knight. He is also often said to have written an agricultural treatise, as well other important Welsh works. None of this is true, of course, but unlike the several other things Walter Map is supposed to have done—translate and author parts of the *Lancelot-Grail Cycle*, and write a good deal of Goliardic and satirical poetry—this fanciful tradition has its roots not in the Middle Ages, but the romantic antiquarianism of nineteenth-century Europe.

The earliest reference in print to Walter Map as the son of Fflur and Blondel occurs in the work of William Owen Pughe (1759-1835), a noted Welsh antiquary and grammarian. In his 1803 book *The Cambrian Biography*, the entry on Walter Map, brief though it is, proved fairly influential:

Walter De Mapes, an eminent writer, who flourished in the middle of the 12th century, and who was chaplain to Henry I. He was the son of Blondel de Mapes, who came with

⁵ For this tradition, see, *The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Printed for the Camden society by J. B. Nichols and son, 1841); A. G. Rigg, "Goliard and other Pseudonyms," *Studi Medievali* 18 (1977): 65-109.

⁶ For the genuine list of Walter's work and verse, see Mantius, *Geschichte der Lateinischen Literatur*, 264-74; Paul Lehman, *Mittelateinische Verse in Distinctiones monasticae et morales vom Anfang des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philos.-philol. un hist. Klasse, Jhrg. 1922, Abh.2 (München, 1922), 12-15; Rigg, "Goliard and other Pseudonyms," 84-5. For the *ex dictis W. Map*, two short anecdotes attributed to Walter in MS Corpus Christi College 32, f. 94v, see *DNC*, 515-

⁷ The only notice of this Welsh tradition in modern scholarship on Walter, as far as I am aware, is found in *Contes pour les gens de cour*, trans. Alan Keith Bate (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993), 15n6.

Robert Fitzhamon to Glamorgan, and obtained the lands of Gweirydd ab Seisyllt lord of Llancarvan; but he had the generosity to marry Flur the only child of Gweirydd that was living; and by whom he had two sons, Hubert and Walter. Hubert dying without heirs, Walter inherited after his brother, and built the village of Trewalter with a mansion for himself. He restored most of the lands of which he became possessed to the original proprietors; and he built the church of Llancarvan as it now stands. He translated the British Chronicle into Latin; and he made a Welsh version of Geoffrey's florid paraphrase. He also wrote a treatise on agriculture in Welsh, which is extant in several manuscripts.⁸

Pughe, although he could be exceedingly credulous and hold eccentric ideas, does not seem to have been in the habit of inventing historical information. For the originator of these ideas of Walter Map, one must look to Pughe's friend Edward Williams (1747-1826), better known by his bardic name, Iolo Morganwg.

A revered antiquary and nationalist in his own day, Iolo is now usually remembered as an extensive forger of ancient Welsh documents. His reputation has improved in recent years, as scholars have re-evaluated his contributions to Welsh culture and recognized his dynamic intellect.⁹ Like James Mcpherson and Thomas Chatterton, Iolo promoted and constructed a romantic view of the medieval past, usually with an eye towards proving the greatness of Wales.¹⁰ Iolo's medieval Wales throbbed with the rich poetry of bards and preserved,

⁸ William Owen Pughe, *The Cambrian Biography: or, Historical Notices of Celebrated Men Among the Ancient Britons* (London: E. Williams, 1803), 340-41.

⁹ For Iolo and his extensive legacy, see Marion Löffler, *The Literary and Historical Legacy of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007); Cathryn A. Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles: National, Regional and Personal Identity in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007); and *A Rattleskull Genius: The Many Faces of Iolo Morganwg*, ed. Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005).

¹⁰ For the European context of Iolo's forgery see, Mary-Ann Constantine, *The Truth Against the World: Iolo Morganwg and Romantic Forgery* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007).

astoundingly, a good deal of pre-Christian druidic lore. Of course, no corner of Wales was richer in ancient tradition than Iolo's own county of Glamorgan, in southern Wales. For Iolo, promoting medieval Wales often meant forging medieval Welsh texts; it took over a century to separate Iolo's creations from genuine documents. Most famously, he passed off his own poems as Dafydd ap Gwilym's and published fictitious Welsh historical chronicles. Walter Map, too, fell victim to Iolo's potent creativity.

But to trace Iolo's work on Walter Map we must begin with another Walter—Walter of Henley (*fl.* c. 1260), a thirteenth-century English writer who composed an agricultural work in Anglo-Norman French.¹¹ This work was translated into Middle Welsh, and it made its way into the Red Book of Hergest, one of the most important compilations of medieval Welsh literature, though the fact that this Welsh text was a translation was not fully grasped until the twentieth century.¹² Iolo knew this Middle Welsh treatise on agriculture well. He first seems to have discovered it in 1796 in the manuscripts of the Rev. Thomas Evans (or Thomas Glyn Cothi) of Brechfa, who had obtained a substantial collection of manuscripts, including some from Ben Simon and James Davies (i.e. Iaco ab Dewi).¹³ Iolo was fond of calling the author of this work

¹¹ *Walter of Henley and Other Treatises on Estate Management and Accounting*, ed. Dorothea Oschinsky (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

¹² *Welsh Walter of Henley*, ed. Alexander Falileyev (Dublin: School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 2006). See also, Ifor Williams, "Hen Draethawd ar Hwsmonaeth," *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 2 (1923): 8-16 and Stephen J. Williams, "Traethawd Gwallter o Henlai ar Hwsmonaeth," *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 6 (1931): 41-55. For the recognition of the text as a translation of Walter of Henley, see Gwilym Peredur Jones, "Hen Draethawd ar Hwsmonaeth," *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 2 (1924): 132-4.

¹³ Griffith John Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1948), 3n.8. The text first caught Iolo's attention during his trip to gather agricultural information during the summer of 1796. His observations, including references to the Middle Welsh treatise, are found in MS National Library of Wales 13115B (formerly Llanover C.28). It seems that Iolo did not copy the treatise from Thomas Glyn Cothi during this trip, since he states in a 1799 letter that he has not yet done so (*The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, ed. Geraint H. Jenkins, Ffion Mair Jones, and David Ceri Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 2:211, no. 514). Nonetheless, he subsequently reported his discovery to Pughe in 1796 (*The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, vol I, no. 412, p. 808; 2:22, no. 448). The first copy of the treatise that Iolo had was that of Owen Jones (Myfyr), whose copy Iolo thought poorer than the one he had seen in the collection of Thomas Glyn Cothi (*The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:211, no. 514). But Iolo may have been the one to give the treatise to Owen Jones in the first place: BL

“*Cato Cymraeg*” (Welsh Cato), after Cato the Elder, the Roman statesman who wrote *De agri cultura*. Iolo took quite a liking to this Middle Welsh agriculture treatise, and even proposed that it be printed in the third volume of the *Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales*, which would contain the “Ethical” texts of early Welsh literature.¹⁴ Although Iolo was unsuccessful in convincing his partner and patron William Owen Pughe to include the *Cato Cymraeg* in the *Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales*, he made a strong case for the work’s moral importance, writing that “it may be justly said that agriculture is in its own nature the most purely moral employment of man.”¹⁵ Indeed, Iolo claimed that the work was “but little, if any thing, inferior” to Hesiod’s *Works and Days*, and he praised the importance of agricultural writing: “The *Georgic* or *Works and Days* of Hesiod, the Greek poet, is not only an agricultural work but is also one of the most beautiful ethical works of all antiquity, and so eminently a moral treatise that the fathers of the primitive Christian church highly recommend it.”¹⁶ For Iolo, it was clearly important that Medieval Wales could produce an author to match Cato the Elder or Hesiod. Fortunately for Iolo’s purposes, nobody had attached a name or date to this Middle Welsh treatise on husbandry. He quickly did so.

To remedy the anonymity of this Middle Welsh text, Iolo composed a booklet called *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* (The Book of Walter Demapes), which he intended to pass off as an original medieval text. It begins, conveniently, by announcing its author: “*Llyma lyfr Gwallter Demapys sef cynghorion hen wr megis y dysgai ac y cynghorai ei fab yngylch llafuriaw Tir a*

Add. 15056 contains a miscellany in Welsh written by Owen Jones, though with a copy of the treatise, written in Iolo’s hand, which is claimed to derive from a book by Thomas Hopcin (*Welsh Walter of Henley*, xxvi). By 1805 Iolo claimed to have three copies of the agricultural treatise in his possession and another that he had lent to a friend (*The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:655, no. 712).

¹⁴ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:655, no. 712.

¹⁵ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:655, no. 712.

¹⁶ It survives in MS National Library of Wales 13126A (formerly Llanover c.39), p. 37-52. In later medieval works, Walter’s cognomen “Map” appears with some frequency as “Demapes,” so this form of Walter’s name, at least, was not Iolo’s invention.

threfnu ysgrublaidd fal hynn” (This is the book of Walter Demapys, that is the counsels of an old man in order to teach and advise his son about working land and managing livestock in the following manner). Iolo probably wrote the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* around 1800.¹⁷ At its core, the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* is a loose reworking of early-modern copies of the Middle Welsh agricultural treatise, all of which themselves derive from the text in the Red Book.¹⁸ However, Iolo claimed to have copied the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* from a book of Thomas Richards of Llangrallo, a local cleric and lexicographer of some note who had died in 1790.¹⁹ This was one of Iolo’s favorite tactics for authenticating his forgeries: he also “discovered” the otherwise unknown *cywyddau* of Dafydd ap Gwilym and the *Aberpergwm Brut* in the same collection of manuscripts. Throughout the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys*, Iolo tinkers with almost every passage of the original Middle Welsh text, but he maintains, for the most part, the general structure and thrust of the work. In fact, considering Iolo’s other forgeries, the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* seems fairly dull—no grand claims and few truly significant changes to his source. One reason Iolo stayed close to his source was his desire to claim that all surviving Middle Welsh texts descended from this particular version written by Walter Map.

One gets wind of Iolo’s intentions when he mentions that the copy of the *Cato Cymraeg* that he had lent Walter Davies (Gwallter Mechain) was the best copy available, and by “best” Iolo means “fullest”: the copy he had lent his friend contained, in his words, “some interpolations of, seemingly, the 15th or the beginning of the 16th century, perhaps about the time of Henry the 7th, but they are valuable, for they are improvements derived from the discoveries

¹⁷ In MS National Library of Wales 13122A, the text immediately following the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* is Thomas Glyn Cothi’s copy of the *Cato Cymraeg*, which he had sent Iolo in early 1800 (*The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:260, no. 539), and which Iolo says he copied in 1800 (MS National Library of Wales 13122A, p. 68).

¹⁸ To make matters more complicated, there is a partial early modern Welsh translation of the same Anglo-Norman treatise in MS Havod 8 (p.18b-22b). As far as I can discern, Iolo was not aware of this later translation. The Havod 8 translation is edited in *Welsh Walter of Henley* and Williams, “Traethawd Gwallter o Henlai ar Hwsmonaeth.”

¹⁹ After the *explicit* (MS National Library of Wales 13122A, p. 52) Iolo has written “*O Lyfr M. Richards o Langrallo*” (From the Book of Mister Richards of Llangrallo).

and experiences subsequent to the age of Walter de Mapes, the reputed author of it originally.”²⁰ Thus, Iolo had forged the source for all later versions of the *Cato Cymraeg*. A radically different version of the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* would not serve Iolo’s purposes here. He needed a fairly unadorned text that could convincingly be said to anticipate later, genuine copies.

In spite of Iolo’s excited promotion of the *Cato Cymraeg* and Walter Map, he never shepherded a version of his *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* into print, though he definitely intended to. For instance, he suggested that the *Cato Cymraeg* be included in the *Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales*, a large collection of medieval Welsh texts, many of which were published and edited for the first time, and a true turning-point in Welsh scholarship.²¹ He wrote to William Owen Pughe that the *Cato Cymraeg* would make an excellent contribution to the third volume of *The Myvyrian Archaiology*, and he thought that both Walter Map’s original (by which he meant his forged version) and the interpolated copy (by which he meant the true original) should be included. With characteristic boldness, Iolo even wrote that if space permitted only one copy, Walter Map’s original should be chosen, “for it is,” Iolo wrote, “as a piece of ancient literature, by far the most interesting.”²² For whatever reason, the *Cato Cymraeg* did not appear in this volume. Although Iolo’s *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* never appeared in print, he was successful in getting two versions of the *Cato Cymraeg* published in *Y Greal*, a Welsh-language magazine founded by his colleague William Owen Pughe.²³ The failure to publish the *Llyfr Gwallter*

²⁰ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:655, no. 712.

²¹ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2: 655, no. 712.

²² *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:655, no. 712.

²³ Both appear in the 1806 volume of *Y Greal*. The first is titled “Amaethyddiaeth” (p. 145-51) and is the same as the version found in MS Bodley Add. 15056, which Iolo had written. It ultimately derives from the Middle Welsh version of Walter of Henley found in the Red Book. The second, also titled “Amaethyddiaeth” (p. 193-207), has been identified as yet another of Iolo’s inventions. It is not, however, the version found in the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys*. Iolo thus wrote at least two inspired copies of the *Cato Cymraeg*. For these two versions published in *Y Greal*, see *Welsh Walter of Henley*, xxvi-xxvii.

Demapys is unsurprising, as Iolo's unpublished material easily dwarfs what he managed to get into print.

Yet, for Iolo, Walter Map was not merely a convenient name for an important text. In Iolo's grand and largely fabricated version of Glamorgan history, Walter Map became a leading literary persona of the twelfth century. Iolo did not simply attribute the earliest version of the *Cato Cymraeg* to Walter, but he crafted a compelling biography as well. Attached to the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* is the following paragraph:

Blondel De Mapes a ddaeth gyda Syr Rhobert ab Amon i Forganwg, ac a gafas Diroedd Gweirydd ab Seisyllt, Arglwydd Llancarvan. A merch oedd i'r Gweirydd hwnnw, a'i henw Fflur, a Blondel a'i priodawdd. Unig blentyn bwy ydoedd hi i Weirydd, canys Cadwgan ei fab ef a laddwyd mewn rhyfel ym mhlaid Gruffudd ab Llywelyn ab Seisyllt, Brenin Cymru oll. I Flondel a Fflur y bu ddau fab: un a'i enw Hubert de Mapes, yr hynaf, a fu farw yn ddietyfedd; yr ail Gwallter de Mapes. Yr hwn oedd wr eglwysig a chapelwr i'r Brenin Harri'r cyntaf. Efe a gafas y cyfoeth ar ôl Hubert ei frawd, ac a wnaeth Bentref Trewallter ym mhlwyf Llancarfan, ac yn hwnnw tŷ teg iddo ei hunan. Efe a ddadroddes lawer o'i diroedd yn ôl i'r hen berchenogion, ac a wnaeth Eglwys Llancarfan, fal ac y mae yn awr. (Llyfr Achau Thomas Truman o Bant Lliwydd.)²⁴

Blondel de Mapes came with Sir Robert Fitzhamon to Glamorgan, and he received the lands of Gweirydd ap Seisyll, lord of Llancarfan. And this Gweirydd had a daughter by the name of Fflur, and Blondel married her. She was Gweirydd's only living child, since his son Cadwgan was killed in battle in support of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn ap Seisyll, king of all Wales. Blondel and Fflur had two sons: the oldest one by the name of Hubert de

²⁴ MS National Library of Wales 13126A, p. 53.

Mapes died without an heir; the second was Walter de Mapes. He was a churchman and a chaplain of Henry I. He received the property after his brother Hubert, and he made the village Trewallter in the parish of Llancarfan, and in it he made a fine house for himself. He restored many of his lands back to their old owners, and he made Llancarfan Church, just as it is to this day. (Thomas Truman of Pant Lliwydd's Book of Genealogies.)

In spite of the Iolo's claim to have copied this passage from Thomas Truman, it is nothing but the creation of his own fervent imagination. Truman was another local antiquarian whose manuscripts often served as the purported sources for Iolo's forgeries. This biographical sketch, which more than makes up for Iolo's restraint in rewriting the *Cato Cymraeg*, provides Walter with illustrious Norman and Welsh ancestry and claims that he founded the village of Trewalter (Walterston) in the Vale of Glamorgan. Walter also becomes the founder of St. Cadog's at Llancarfan, which was probably intended to link Walter with Caradog of Llancarfan, a well-known Welsh hagiographer.²⁵

Iolo had good reason to choose Walter Map as the author of the *Cato Cymraeg*, making him an illustrious man of letters in medieval Wales. Walter almost certainly came to Iolo's attention through a fairly widespread early-modern misidentification. Our Walter Map—the courtier of Henry II and late twelfth-century churchman—was frequently seen as the same Walter that Geoffrey of Monmouth mentions in the prologue to his *History of the Kings of Britain*: Geoffrey claims that a “Walter Archdeacon of Oxford, a man skilled in the rhetorical arts and in foreign histories, brought [him] a very old book in the British tongue,” which famously contained the deeds of the ancient Britons, including the illustrious king Arthur.²⁶

Geoffrey of Monmouth finished this work around 1136, almost certainly before Walter Map was

²⁵ In another of Iolo's manuscripts, MS National Library of Wales 13154A (formerly Llanover C.67), a note regarding Walter Map and the parish of Llancarfan appears (p. 290-2).

²⁶ *HRB*, §2, p. 4-5.

even born. The confusion begins because Walter Map himself became archdeacon of Oxford in 1196 or 7. Thus, early antiquarians often identified Walter Map, Archdeacon of Oxford, with Geoffrey's Walter, who had held the same position a few generations before. This mistake is easily forgiven since Walter's genuine work was not published until the middle of the nineteenth century. Iolo seems to have fallen, perhaps willfully, for the same misidentification. The supposed connection to the work the *History of the Kings of Britain* made Walter Map an attractive figure, and the fact that only a few miles away from Iolo's native Flemingston in Glamorgan lay a small village by the name of Walterston was merely icing on the cake.²⁷

Once Iolo hit upon this identification, he began to promote Walter Map with vigor. In Iolo's letters and work from 1800 to 1805, we find him returning again and again to Walter de Mapes, whom he also calls Gwallter Archdiagon (Archdeacon Walter).²⁸ Iolo lauds Walter as "the first writer in the Welsh language of that age."²⁹ Moreover, in the second volume of *Myvyrian Archaiology*, Iolo and his co-authors argue the *Brut Tysilio*, a medieval Welsh chronicle, should in fact be designated the chronicle of Walter Mapes, Archdeacon of Oxford.³⁰ To Iolo's contemporaries, this modest claim of authorship was actually quite a polemical charge.³¹ The controversy lay in how scholars of the time understood the numerous Welsh translations of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*. Most Welsh scholars believed that Geoffrey was, for the most part, reporting the truth about the ancient British past, and that he had a Welsh source. Contributing to this belief is the presence of several Welsh colophons that identify Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, as the translator—not the source—of the

²⁷ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2: 694, no. 727.

²⁸ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:626, no. 700; 645, no. 709; 655, no. 712; 694, no. 727.

²⁹ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:626, no. 700.

³⁰ *The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales: A Collection of Historical Documents from Ancient Manuscripts*, ed. Owen Jones, Iolo Morganwg, and William Owen Pughe, vol. 2 (London: Printed by S. Rousseu and sold by Longman and Rees, 1801), vi.

³¹ For a discussion of Geoffrey's reception in Wales, see *Brut y Brenhinedd: Llanstephan MS. I Version*, ed. Brynley F. Roberts (Dublin: The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1984), 55-74.

ancient British history.³² These colophons helped scholars like Lewis Morris (1701-1765) to argue that a group of Welsh chronicles took priority over Geoffrey, that Geoffrey had added many fanciful details in his Latin translation of the original Welsh, and that the original author was the seventh-century Welsh saint, Tysilio.³³ Morris thus called the original work the *Brut Tysilio* (Tysilio's Chronicle). Iolo despised Morris's theory, asserting that "Tyssiliaw is all fable," and he had little use for Geoffrey's work in general.³⁴ In claiming that Walter Map was responsible for the *Brut Tysilio*, Iolo knocked the legs out from under Morris and his circle, all while gaining more literary prestige for his homeland of Glamorgan.

Yet Iolo was not done with Walter Map. By 1804, he was asserting that Walter had translated the *Ystoria Dared* out of its original Greek, when in fact it is a Welsh translation of the popular Medieval Latin history attributed to Dares Phrygius.³⁵ Since the *Ystoria Dared* often accompanies Welsh translations of Geoffrey of Monmouth in medieval manuscripts, and since the two together serve as a continuous narrative of ancient Welsh history, Iolo was planning to make Walter responsible for the lion's share of prose writing on ancient Britain. Knowledge of Greek in medieval Wales, which Iolo might connect with the putative Trojan heritage of the Welsh, would be simply another sign of the superiority of his countrymen. Iolo's celebration of his country, however, was trumped by his love for his native South Wales, Glamorgan in particular; here, the figure of Walter Map could also be of service.³⁶ Walter helped Iolo get around the unfortunate fact that South Wales was colonized by the Normans while the North remained free. Iolo, as dexterous as he was with fact, could not deny this historical reality, which

³² For an overview, see *Brut y Brenhinedd*, 68-9.

³³ For the development of the theory Tysilio as the original author, see A. O. H. Jarman, "Lewis Morris a Brut Tysilio," *Llên Cymru* 2 (1952-3): 161-83.

³⁴ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:627, no 700. See also, *Brut y Brenhinedd*, 72-3.

³⁵ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:627, no 700.

³⁶ For Iolo's promotion of the South over the North, see Cathryn Charnell-White, *Barbarism and Bardism: North Wales versus South Wales in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* (Aberystwyth: Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, 2004) and Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*.

would have been a sore spot for anyone who argued for the primacy of South Wales in every aspect of Welsh culture. Rather, Iolo openly embraced the Normans as another instance of the South's preeminence: "nothing ever contributed so much to the advancement of literature amongst the Welsh and that in their own language."³⁷ The Normans, according to Iolo, spurred a sort of renaissance of Welsh writing in South Wales—an observation which is not without merit. He writes, "This is, I confess a phenomenon that could not have been expected, and so is this other fact, that in all south Wales the Normans have never been able to obtrude upon us a single word of their language."³⁸ (Here his thoughts on Southern Welsh are, however, wholly without merit.) Iolo scathingly contrasts Norman South Wales with the North, where "literature had almost died away...till poetry was revived in north Wales by Gruffudd ap Cynan, more truly an Irish man than a Welshman and under Irish patronage."³⁹ Walter Map's genius, the product of the Norman Blondel de Mapes and the Welsh princess Fflur, was further proof of how the Norman invasion had invigorated and improved southern Welsh culture. The hybrid culture of the Welsh March, rather than being a South Walian blemish, was turned into a blessing in Iolo's eyes. Iolo had intended to write about these matters at greater extent in his work *View of the Ancient Welsh Literature*, but he never completed this work.⁴⁰ Indeed, like many other of Iolo's pursuits, after an intense period of promotion, the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys*, the *Cato Cymraeg*, and Walter Map fell by the wayside as Iolo focused his efforts elsewhere.

Iolo's biography of Walter Map, however, lived on for a century. Unlike the rest of the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys*, Iolo's biographical portrait of Walter Map did find its way into print. Rarely publishing his own material, Iolo tended to rely on his wide network of friends for his

³⁷ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:626, no 700.

³⁸ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:627, no 700.

³⁹ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, 2:627, no 700.

⁴⁰ For similar material, see Iolo's unpublished "Schools of Welsh Poetry," in MS National Library of Wales 13108B, which has been edited in Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*, 202-47, esp. 231.

works to find a reading public. Characteristically, Iolo passed his specious biography to William Owen Pughe, who then translated the passage into English and used it for his entry on Walter Map in *The Cambrian Biography* (1803), which was quoted in full at the beginning of this section. A comparison of these two passages makes it clear that Pughe's entry is nothing more than a translation of Iolo's fabricated biography. The only detail present in Pughe's entry absent from the *Llyfr Gwallter Demapys* clearly derives from Iolo's progressive aggrandizement of Walter Map, and distills what he and his colleagues had already claimed about Walter in the *Myvyrian Archaiology*.⁴¹

For most Welsh scholars of the nineteenth century, Pughe's biography served as the standard account of Walter Map's life for a century thereafter. As Iolo had intended, Walter Map's brief biography stirred patriotic sentiment in the hearts of its readers. One anonymous reviewer in *The Gentleman's Magazine* was so moved by Walter's largesse in returning Norman spoils back to the native Welsh that he claimed, "[i]n this little narrative there are elements which, in able hands, might serve as the basis of a national poem or historical tale."⁴² Iolo had certainly hit his mark. Yet even as Iolo's work underwent harsh scrutiny and rebuttal, his portrait of Walter survived. Thomas Stephens (1821-75), one of the earliest critics of Iolo (though he was careful not to chastise Iolo's saintly reputation too harshly) and whom one scholar has called the "lone representative of rational investigation" in mid-nineteenth-century Wales, nonetheless unwittingly relied on Iolo when he used Pughe's biography of Walter Map in his lauded 1849 work, *The Literature of the Kymry*.⁴³ Although Stephens doubted that Walter Map translated the

⁴¹ Pughe's entry adds the following sentence: "He translated the British Chronicle into Latin; and he made a Welsh version of Geoffrey's florid paraphrase" (Pughe, *The Cambrian Biography*, 341).

⁴² "Review of *The Literary History of the Middle Ages* by the Rev. J. Berington," *The Gentleman's Magazine* Sept., no. 180 (1846): 274.

⁴³ Löffler, *The Literary and Historical Legacy*, 20; Thomas Stephens, *The Literature of the Kymry: Being a Critical Essay on the History of the Language and Literature of Wales during the Twelfth and Two Succeeding Centuries* (Llandoverly: William Rees London, Longman & Co., 1849), 323-4.

Welsh historical chronicles into Latin, he nevertheless followed Pughe in placing Walter earlier in the twelfth century, as a contemporary of Geoffrey of Monmouth, conflating him with Walter, the Archdeacon of Oxford whom Geoffrey mentions in his *History*.⁴⁴ For Stephens, too, Walter Map served as a source of national pride: Walter, along with Gildas, Nennius, Asser, Gerald of Wales, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, belonged to a Welsh ecclesiastical establishment that displayed “much more literary activity than the English.”⁴⁵ Following medieval tradition, Stephens also attributes several Arthurian romances to Walter Map, creating, with a few sentences, a fabulously productive medieval author.⁴⁶ Had Walter Map actually written these romances, as well as his Welsh works, he would indeed have gone a long way in proving Stephens’ assertion that “the Welsh were the most civilised and intellectual people of that age.”⁴⁷

Iolo’s biography of Walter, disseminated mainly through Pughe’s *Cambrian Biography*, found traction well into the later nineteenth century, and as late as the early twentieth.⁴⁸ After Stephens, however, the next generation of Welsh scholars largely ignored Iolo’s fantastical account and relied primarily on the information that Wright presented in his 1850 edition of the *De nugis curialium*. Without Iolo’s aggrandizing portrait, Walter Map ceased to be regarded as fully Welsh. Welsh scholars such as John Rhys and J. E. Lloyd seldom mentioned Walter, and when they did he is never explicitly termed Welsh. Lloyd, for instance, simply refers to Walter

⁴⁴ Stephens, *Literature of the Kymry*, 316-7, 323.

⁴⁵ Stephens, *Literature of the Kymry*, 80.

⁴⁶ Stephens, *Literature of the Kymry*, 324.

⁴⁷ Stephens, *Literature of the Kymry*, 331.

⁴⁸ For instance, *Cardiff Records: Being Materials for a History of the County Borough from the Earliest Times*, ed. John Hobson Matthews, vol. 4 (Cardiff: By order of the Corporation, 1903), 29. This passage also demonstrates that Pughe’s biography was not the sole way that Iolo’s mischief was disseminated; it was taken directly from Iolo’s manuscript account of Southern Welsh history called “An Account of the cause of the conquest of Glamorgan by Sir Robert Fitz Hamon and his twelve knights, by Sir Edward Mansel of Margam,” to which Iolo had appended his biography of Walter Map. For this text, see Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morganwg*, 200-3, esp. 201n157.

as source for “border traditions.”⁴⁹ Tellingly absent is Stephens’ ill-founded patriotism regarding Walter Map. By the middle of the twentieth century, R. T. Jenkins could sternly write of Walter “*Rhaid ymwrthod â’r syniad ei fod yn Gymro*” (The idea that he is a Welshman must be rejected).⁵⁰ Not only did the twentieth century see Walter Map stripped of his French romances and Latin verses, but of his Welsh writing and ethnicity as well.

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⁴⁹ John Edward Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*, 3rd ed. (London: Longmans, 1939), 2:358. Rhys, it should be noted, uses a story from the *De nugis curialium* in *Celtic Folklore: Welsh and Manx* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901), 70-4.

⁵⁰ *Bywgraffiadur Cymreig hyd 1940*, ed. J. E. Lloyd and R. T. Jenkins (London: Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, 1959), 578.