

Four volumes of the Elis Gruffudd Chronicle

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Newsletter April – June 2018

The Elis Gruffudd chronicle added to the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register

The Elis Gruffudd Chronicle was compiled between 1550 and 1552 by a soldier and administrator serving in the English garrison at Calais. It chronicles the history of the world from the Creation to his own time, and is the last great Welsh chronicle, combining history, a unique body of traditional Welsh legendary matter, and important eyewitness testimony of Tudor times. The Chronicle joins five other items held by the Library which have been inscribed on the Register. A part of the Chronicle will be available to view in the Library's *The Mostyn Manuscripts: a Centennial Exhibition* from 30 June until 8 December.

New acquisitions

New acquisitions include additions to the Urdd Gobaith Cymru Archive, papers of Peter Thomas, former Secretary of State for Wales, the diary of the photographer John Thomas and the papers of Eirionedd Baskerville. With generous support from the Friends of the National Libraries, the Library purchased six items relating to the First World War poet Edward Thomas at a recent Bonhams auction. The items include drafts of his poems *The Mountain Chapel*, *The Birds' Nests* and *House and Man*.

Jack Lowe Lifeboat Station Project

On 28 April some 520 visitors came to the Library as part of the Lifeboat Fun Day organised with the RNLI to celebrate the Jack Lowe Lifeboat Station Project, and to mark the Welsh Government's Year of the Sea. Visitors enjoyed a range of experiences that included an opportunity to visit the exhibition itself, craft sessions, a performance of the Cantre'r Gwaelod legend, seeing a real lifeboat, a treasure hunt, face painting, a craft workshop and welly wanging!

Jack Lowe brought along his mobile darkroom, a decommissioned NHS ambulance, and used this to demonstrate a Victorian process to make photographs on glass, reflecting the earlier tradition of photographing lifeboat crews. The Jack Lowe exhibition will run in the Library's Upper Central Hall until March 2019.





Eisteddfod yr Urdd

The main theme of The National Library's stand on the Eisteddfod yr Urdd maes in Llanelwedd this year was the life and work of Kyffin Williams, and over 1,200 people visited the stand during the week. Young visitors had an opportunity to help reproduce a number of iconic Kyffin landscapes using acrylic paint on canvas. A bilingual booklet about the life and work of Kyffin Williams was distributed free of charge to children visiting the stand. The artist Catrin Williams also delivered a workshop and during the day 62 children learnt how to sketch in the style of Kyffin Williams, and took part in producing sketchbooks.

Kyffin Williams workshops

The Education Service delivered a series of workshops on Kyffin Williams to accompany the Library's *Kyffin Williams: Behind the Frame* exhibition. From April to June nearly 850 children visited the Library to participate in workshops based on the career and paintings of Kyffin. The sessions were a combination of learning about his life and work, sketching in Kyffin's style, and an opportunity to visit the exhibition. Each pupil received a free bilingual booklet about Kyffin Williams. Of the 23 visiting groups, 8 were welcomed from Carmarthenshire and Gwynedd Fusion areas.

Class Art

On 25 April the Library delivered a *Class Art* project in partnership with the Gwynedd Fusion Network. This project was part of a programme of activities delivered by the Library to commemorate and celebrate the centenary of the birth of the Ynys Môn artist, Kyffin Williams. 10 of his original works were taken to two schools in Penygroes, and artists were commissioned to lead workshops based on the art and style of Kyffin Williams. Catrin Williams led a workshop on Kyffin landscapes to Year 4 pupils in Ysgol Gynradd Bro Llew, and Eleri Jones led sessions on his portraits to Year 12 students at Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle who are studying A Level Art.

As a follow up to this project pupils from Ysgol Bro Llew visited the Library in June and had an opportunity to visit the *Kyffin Williams: Behind the Frame* exhibition in Oriol Gregynog. Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle students will also be visiting the Library before the end of term.



Access to Collections

The Library arranged several events to promote and educate the public on access to the Library's collections:

- Presentation to 40 subject librarians at Cardiff University regarding the non-print legal deposit material, and to bring attention to the National Library's space at the University Library.
- A successful Family History Fair was held at the Library, where 250 people attended to see various stands and to listen to two presentations in the Drwm.
- Family History Workshops for the *Edward Howell Family Association* from America
- A two-day course arranged in collaboration with the Department of Lifelong Education, Aberystwyth University, on the resources pertaining to family history held at the Library.
- Celebrations commemorating 200 years of Wales-Ohio relationship at Llangeitho and Cilcennin.

Sharing 5,000 Welsh portraits

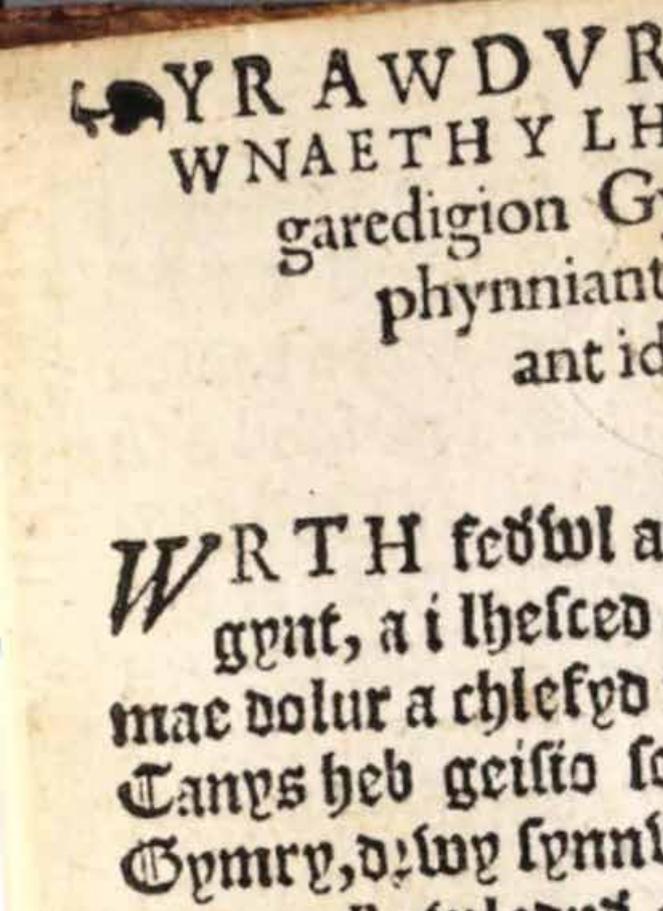
Nearly 5,000 portraits from the Library's collections have been loaded to Wikimedia Commons with the aim of increasing awareness of their creators and subjects, and encouraging further use of them. By sharing them in this way, the portraits can be used to illustrate Wikipedia articles in any language, and thereby introducing them to new audiences on one of the most popular web platforms in the world. It is also hoped that this will encourage others to analyse them, link them with information from other sources, and re-purpose them in new ways.



Visit by the School of English Literature, Bangor

Students from the School visited in April as part of the continuing Chaucer collaboration project.

They attended a workshop and studied original material relevant to their fields of interest. A special exhibition of Chaucerian treasures was displayed in the Summers Room, with students guided by Sue Niebrzydowski, Reader at Bangor University, and Maredudd ap Huw, the Library's Manuscripts Librarian.



Revealing the Objects

A new weekly blog series *Revealing the Objects* began in June. The series is based on the Library's contribution to *The Rise of Literacy* project for the European digital platform Europeana. As part of the project, the Library is working with 12 other partner institutions to explore the history of reading and writing in Europe. As a result of this initiative, various users will be able to access a wide range of text based objects, many of which are being showcased on a digital platform for the first time. The new series will reveal the Library's contributions on a thematic basis. From manuscripts to newspapers, dictionaries to cook books, and children's literature to ballads; they all have something to offer with regards to tracking the history of literacy. From the iconic to the unexpected, they collectively give a multi-layered summary on the evolution of reading and writing in Wales and beyond, from the mid-thirteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century.

Volunteering

From April to June 66 people volunteered weekly at the Library, and 3 managed to move on to gainful employment. More than 400 virtual volunteers have now registered on the Library's crowdsourcing platform.

Aberystwyth Shipping Records

Many of the Library's first volunteers worked on transcribing lists of crews in the Aberystwyth Shipping Records. We received the good news that the *Crew List Index Project* intend to publish the transcriptions on their website over the coming months. The www.crewlist.org.uk website is used extensively as a valuable resource for maritime records, and will be an excellent platform to display the work of our volunteers to a wider audience.

Living Memory

Work is ongoing to develop and expand the *Living Memory* project, which looks at potential ways of utilising graphic and audio-visual collections to stimulate memories in older people and those living with dementia. An online questionnaire was completed by more than 100 people that work with the elderly across Wales. As result of the positive feedback the Library is seeking funding to take the project forward through selecting and packaging old films and photographs, and providing training to healthcare professionals on how to use the materials and access further digital resources from the National Library of Wales.

Crowdsourcing

The project to transcribe the 11,000 images that are part of the Cardiganshire Great War Tribunal Records is now complete. This HLF *First World War: then and now* funded project reached 259 participants through promotional and training events.

Some 4,000 Gwilym Livingstone Evans photographs have been published on the Library's crowdsourcing platform and workshops are underway in Blaenau Ffestiniog to support local people to add value to the collection by tagging and describing images. This cross-generational project is delivered in partnership with the Gwynedd Fusion Network.

Charting the Seas

Carto-Cymru: the Wales Map Symposium 2018 was attended by over 60 delegates and a record number viewed via Periscope. Topics under the theme of Charting the Seas included the *Cherish* project, 19th century marine mapping, Welsh literature and marine geography, and the Library's marine chart collection. The feedback was very positive, with over half of the attendees having also attended the event last year.

Carto-Cymru speakers



The Dictionary of Welsh Biography – a new website on the horizon

A new website is currently being developed for the Dictionary of Wales Biography with the aim of it being launched in the autumn. The Dictionary of Welsh Biography's current website contains short articles on about 5,000 Welsh people who made an important contribution to national life in Wales or beyond, including adventurers, scientists, politicians, campaigners, authors and artists. The new website is being developed in partnership with the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, and with support from the Colwinston Trust.

Sir Benfro Centre

Work is nearing completion on the new gallery in Haverfordwest that will include exhibitions of items from the Library's collections for the next five years. The building work should end in August, and following a period of monitoring the environmental conditions the Library's Exhibitions Team will begin installing the first temporary exhibition on Kyffin Williams, and a permanent exhibition on Pembrokeshire. The gallery is due to open to the public at the end of October.

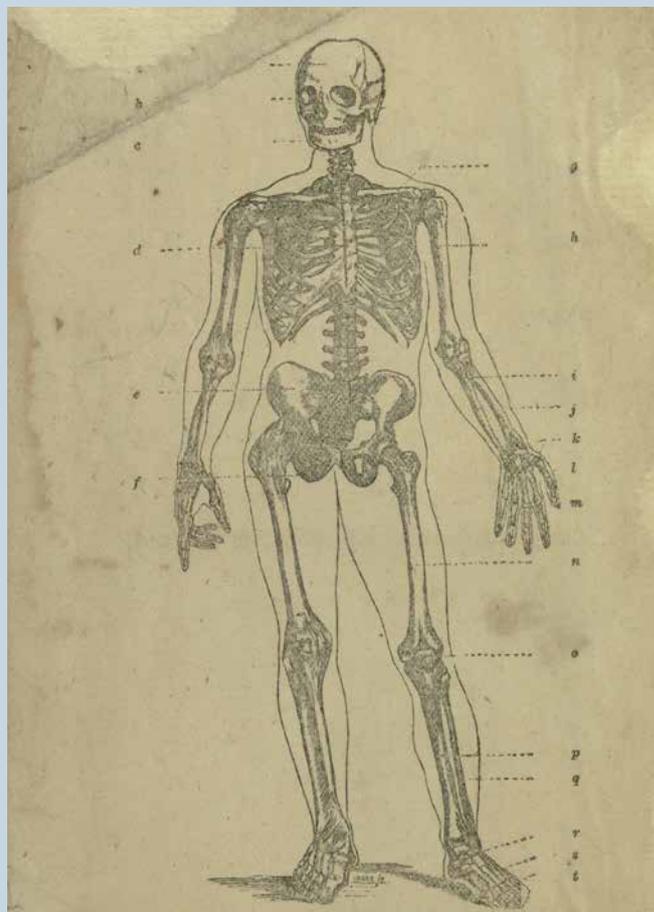


Medicine and Health in Wales before the NHS

The Library has been successful in securing a grant from the Wellcome Trust for the *Medicine and Health in Wales before the NHS* project. The project involves cataloguing over 4,000 items in the Historic Welsh Print Collection, and those items published prior to 1900 will be digitised. The full collection of printed minutes and annual reports from the King Edward VII National Memorial Association, a precursor to the NHS which established an all-Wales free healthcare network to treat tuberculosis, will also be digitised.

The journey of the book

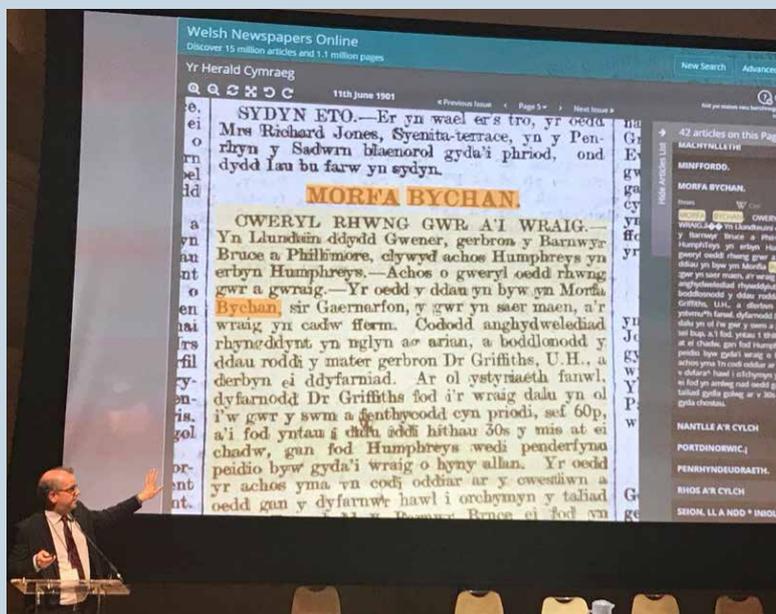
Over the Easter holidays, children had the opportunity to follow the journey of the book after it reaches the Library. The children were eager to lend a hand and they had an opportunity to sort the books to various workflows, before assisting in cataloguing, sticking location labels and taking some of the books on trolleys to be shelved in the stores. One of the children stated "When I grow up...I want to work in the Library"!



Picture from *Y glust a'r tafod, sef y rhannau o'r ty mae yr enaid yn byw ynddo* by the Rev. Robert Evans, Aberdar. Published in Bala, 1877.

Tír na nÓg: an Irish and Welsh Cineconcert

The screening of this documentary film from a trio of Welsh journalists on 22 June was warmly received by a strong audience. The film had been restored through collaboration between the Irish Film Archive and Wales Film Archive in 1995. The newly digitised film was shown with a live musical accompaniment.



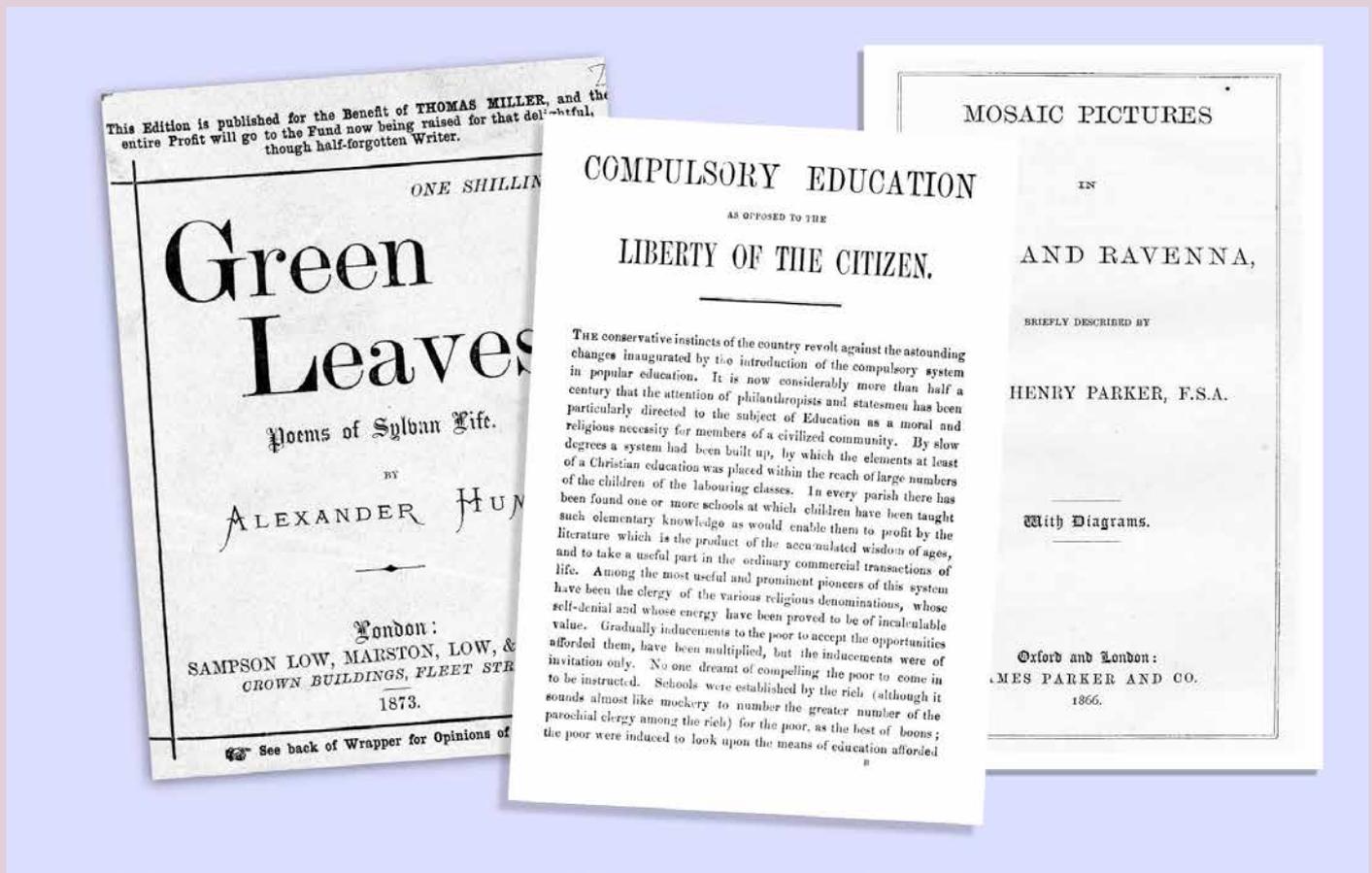
Michael Appleby from Yale University showing the Library's newspapers website

The Library's new crowdsourcing platform featured at the international IIF conference in Washington DC

The Library's new crowdsourcing platform featured at the international IIF conference in May. Over 250 librarians, archivists, IT specialists and academics from organisations around the world came together at the Library of Congress, Washington DC to present and discuss how the IIF (International Image Interoperability Framework) enables organisations to share digital images openly. As well as a presentation from the National Library on the crowdsourcing platform, the pioneering work the Library has undertaken with its newspaper digitisation was also discussed. The www.newspapers.library.wales site now attracts over 3,000 unique users every month.

Digitisation Highlights

Gladstone Pamphlets - Work has started on processing of the Gladstone pamphlet collection. Over 5000 individual volumes have been scanned, many containing handwritten notes and annotations. This resource will not only give an insight into Gladstone's thoughts and opinions, but also provide scholars with an invaluable source for further study of the Victorian era.



Peniarth Manuscript Collection - A further 16 manuscripts from the Peniarth Collection have been digitised. Work on this project will continue, with an aim to make the digital versions of these manuscripts available at regular intervals throughout the year.

Political Ephemera - Digitisation work has started on the Welsh Political Ephemera project. The collection being scanned includes thousands of items from election campaigns in Wales, from the late 1880's until the late 1970's.

Meredydd Evans and Phyllis Kinney Archives - Scanning work has been completed on the index cards. The digitisation is part of a programme of work to support the creation of a Welsh folk music database. To make this data searchable, the hand written index cards will be transcribed by volunteers using the library's crowd sourcing platform.

Collection Development - Our Thanks

Recently, the Friends of the National Libraries donated £20,000 to assist the Library to buy papers relating to the First World War poet Edwards Thomas, and a Friend of the Library, Murray Chapman, presented a donation of £20,000 to carry out necessary work on the Great Sessions records. The Library would like to express its gratitude for these generous donations and for ensuring the longevity of these collections for future generations.