



LLYFRGELL GENEDLAETHOL CYMRU THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES

Mae'r fersiwn digidol hwn o'r erthygl/cylchgrawn wedi'i greu gan Lyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru.

NODER y gall cyfyngiadau hawlfraint ac amodau trwydded fod yn berthnasol. Am ragor o wybodaeth, ewch i **Mwy o Wybodaeth** wrth ddarllen y cylchgrawn ar wefan [Cylchgronau Cymru](http://cylchgronau.llyfrgell.cymru) (cylchgronau.llyfrgell.cymru).

Efallai y bydd hefyd gennych ddiddordeb yn [Papurau Newydd Cymru](http://papuraunewydd.llyfrgell.cymru) (papuraunewydd.llyfrgell.cymru), chwaer-wefan gan Lyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru sy'n rhoi mynediad i dros 1.1 milwn o dudalennau o dros 130 o bapurau newydd a gyhoeddwyd rhwng 1805 a 1919.

This digital version of the article/journal has been created by The National Library of Wales.

PLEASE NOTE that copyright restrictions and license terms may apply. For more information, view **More Information** when reading the journal on the [Welsh Journals](http://journals.library.wales) (journals.library.wales) website.

You may also be interested in [Welsh Newspapers](http://newspapers.library.wales) (newspapers.library.wales), a sister-site from the National Library of Wales that gives access to over 1.1 million pages from over 130 newspapers published between 1805 and 1919.



THE PRYSE FAMILY OF GOGERDDAN

I

In October 1948 the National Library acquired from Sir Pryse L. Saunders-Pryse, Bart., the Gogerddan collection of family papers which contains a considerable amount of material of importance to students of the history of Wales, and of Cardiganshire in particular. There are some apparent gaps in the collection, due partly no doubt to the transfer—and subsequent loss—at various times, of certain documents to one of the numerous houses which formed part of the family possessions from the seventeenth century onward. That such transfers were occasionally made to meet the convenience of the *penteulu* we know from references which appear in some of the family letters. And if further proof were needed, suffice it to say that the present collection includes a quantity of deeds and documents which relate to Buscot Park, an Oxfordshire estate which devolved upon the family as the result of the marriage of Margaret Pryse and Edward Loveden Townsend in 1773.

Nevertheless, we have here sufficient material, much of it highly interesting, to allow us to trace the history of one of the leading county families, and to assess its influence on the course of the history of modern Wales. In doing so, it will also be possible to catch glimpses of the social, economic, political, and religious aspects of Welsh life throughout the past five centuries. To maintain a desirable continuity and a fairly balanced picture it may be necessary on occasion to seek corroborative evidence from other sources.

It is natural that a collection of documents accumulated over so long a period should include a number of interesting papers which are not directly concerned with the family. Many of these have been acquired by virtue of the numerous public offices held by members of the family, while others through documentary association have joined the family muniments as and when the estate expanded.

It may not be amiss here, perhaps, to refer to some of the more interesting of the earlier documents of this class which form part of the Gogerddan collection, on account of their general historical value, and also because they help to build up a more complete background for that part of north Cardiganshire with which we are primarily concerned.

Llanbadarn Fawr with its ancient church was the native focal point of Cwmwd Perfedd¹ from the earliest times. Here were written some of the most vivid passages of *Brut y Tywysogion*,² and here, in the fourteenth century, came Dafydd ap Gwilym from his home at Brogynin to cast flirtatious glances at the local wenches during the services. So historic a place, which once boasted of a bishop,³ was not forsaken lightly, for, although Edward I had built a castle on the sea-shore a mile or so away, we find that the town of Aberystwyth, which sprang up around the castle, is sometimes referred to as Llanbadarn or Llanbadarn Gaerog even as late as the middle of the fifteenth century.

In order to encourage the growth of the new town, and to give it a status superior to that acquired by Llanbadarn Fawr, Edward granted it a charter, dated 28 December 1277, which was confirmed by successive sovereigns including Henry VIII. The Latin text of the confirmation of 12 Edward IV (1473) was erroneously published by the Reverend Prebendary W. H. Davey in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (October 1878, No. 36, p. 301) as the charter of Llanbadarn Fawr, through an oversight on his part in failing to identify the 'Ville de Lanbader' of the charter as Aberystwyth. A copy translation of the charter and confirmation by Henry VIII in 1528 was made on 2 April 1726, and has been preserved among the Gogerddan archives. As generations of the Pryse family have played an important part in its history, and as much of their political activity, at least, was centred on the town, it may be of interest to publish this document at length.

'The King to all to whom it may concern, greeting. We have inspected certain letters patent of Confirmation of our Lord Henry 6th, late King of England, our ancestor, made in these words: Henry by the grace of God King of England and France and Lord of Ireland to all to whom these present letters shall come, greeting. We have inspected letters patent of our most beloved Lord and Father the late King made in these words: Henry by the grace of God King of England & France and Lord of Ireland to all Bailiffs and their vassals to whom these present letters shall come, greeting. We have inspected the charter of our Lord the King, late King of England, since his acquisition of the throne, made in these words: Richard, by the grace of God King of England and France and Lord of Ireland to the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Dukes, Earls, Barons, Justices, Viscounts, Provosts, Ministers, all Bailiffs and their Vassals, greetings: We have inspected the Charter which our Lord of illustrious memory, late King of England, our Grandfather made in these words: Edward by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine to the Archbishops [etc.], greeting: Know ye that we will and have granted that our Vill of Lanbadar be a free Burgh without any hindrance whatever. We grant moreover to our burgesses of the same Burgh and their heirs that their town be enclosed by a trench and walls that they have a market town with a corporation and other customs and liberties to such gilds belonging and that no one who is not of that gild shall carry on any traffic in the aforesaid Burgh unless by the will of the same Burgesses. We grant moreover to them and to their heirs that if any one born of any one in the aforesaid Burgh shall reside and hold land in the same and shall have been in the aforesaid Gild and Corporation and shall have payed his lot and scot with the same our Burgesses for one year and a day without blame undoubtedly he can not be redemanded by his master but shall remain free in the same Burgh. Besides, we grant to our aforesaid Burgesses of Lanbadar and their heirs that they have Soc, and Sac, Toll, and Tithe, and Infangenethof, and that they shall be free throughout all our Land from Theolone, Leltoge, Passage, Pontage, and Stallage, and from Lene and Danegelt and Taywite and all other customs

and exactions throughout our whole dominions as well in England as in all our other territories. And we grant that our aforesaid Burgesses of Lanbadar have freely all other liberties and Freedoms throughout our whole territories as our Burgesses of Montgomery have. We will moreover and grant to our aforesaid Burgesses of Lanbadar that they have every year without any preventions two fairs in the aforesaid Burgh namely one at the Pentecost to last four days namely on the eve the day and two days following and the other on the feast of Saint Michael and six days following and one market there on Monday in each week with all liberties and customs to such fairs and markets belonging We will moreover that all merchants of our land and merchants of other lands which are at peace with us and bring their merchandise to the aforesaid Burgh and tarry there and depart from thence have liberty to come stay and retire as well by water as by land and that they have free ingress into our territories and free egress out of our territories without any impediment of our Bailiffs and others by conforming to due and right customs Wherefore we will and firmly resolve that the aforesaid Vill of Lanbadar be a free Burgh and that they have two fairs every year at the Pentecost and Feast of Saint Michael and one market every week on a Monday and that they have liberties and freedoms aforesaid without impediment well and in peace free and in quiet fully and entirely as is aforesaid the liberty of our City of London being safe To which are witnesses the venerable fathers R. Bath and Wells and Th. Hereford Bishops William de Valence uncle for Henry de Lacy Earl of Lincoln Roger de Mortimer Anthony de Bek Archdeacon of Dunholm Hugh son of Otto Walke de Helynn Richard de Bosto and others Given under our hand at Westminster on the 28th day of December in the 6th year of our reign We also the aforesaid concessions ratifications possessions and grants for us and our heirs as far as in us lieth grant and confirm to the aforesaid Burgesses of Lanbadar and their heirs and successors as the aforesaid charter fully testifies and as the same Burgesses their predecessors and liberties and freedoms contained in the aforesaid charter have fully used and enjoyed to which are witnesses the Venerable fathers J. Wynton our Chancellor J. Ely and W. Norwich Bishops Thomas Wake Henry de Percy and others Given under our hand at Eltham on the 28th day of March in the 5th year of our reign. We have also inspected the Charter of our Lord Edward formerly Prince of Wales our greatgrandfather made in these words Edward son of the illustrious King of England Prince of Wales Earls of Chester Pont and Montreuil to all Bailiffs and their deputies in upper Aeron greeting Because at the celebration of the Pentecost in our Lampadar in our general council at London lately proposed which under our private seal was signified to our Justiciary of South Wales we have sent to be proclaimed We have ordained that a market be held at Lampadar every week on a monday according to the tenor of the charter of our Burgesses and granted by our Lord the King our Father and that all buying and selling by water from the river Ayrn to the river Dovey

should be transacted in the said our Burgh of Lampadar We command you that you cause the aforesaid Market to be publicly proclaimed and strictly to be forbidden on our part that no one under our jurisdiction shall negotiate any merchandise in our aforesaid land except in bread and hiring servants and other victuals in our said Burgh bought in the gross which being first bought according to the custom of the country may be lawfully sold Given by Walter Hakelut our Justiciary at Carmarthen Chancellor of South Wales and West Wales under our seal on the 4th day of August in the 33rd year of the reign of our father King Edward We also the said concessions and confirmations as well of our great great grandfather and great grandfather as our grandfather aforesaid the same ratifications possessions and grants of our especial favor and by the assent of our Council for us and our heirs as far as in us lieth accept approve ratify and the same to our beloved Burgesses of the aforesaid Vill and their heirs and successors we concede and confirm as the aforesaid charter strictly testifies; Willing to extend our gracious favor to the aforesaid Burgesses we have granted to them for us and our heirs as far as in us lieth that it be lawful for them or their predecessors Burgesses of the aforesaid Vill in any one or any number of the liberties or freedoms contained in the said charters on any emergency which they have not up to that time used that they nevertheless and their heirs and successors Burgesses of the said Vill the liberties and freedoms in the aforesaid charters fully enjoy and use without any let or hindrance of us or our heirs of our Justiciary Escheators Viscounts or other Bailiffs or their deputies whatsoever And moreover as a further mark of our favor we have granted for us and our heirs as far as in us lieth to our aforesaid Burgesses of our aforesaid Burgh which is in the County of Cardigan in South Wales that neither they themselves nor their heirs and successors at any time shall be convicted by any law suits under any appeals of rights injuries transgressions crimes calumnies or demands whatsoever imposed on them or to be imposed on them within the aforesaid County or the County of Carmarthen but by Burgesses of the aforesaid Burgh or by English Burgesses of the same counties and that they or their heirs and successors have our protection and that of our heirs in all things touching the Burgesses of the same Burgh for the time being and who live within the same Vill. So that no Deputy Bailiff or other Minister of us or our Heirs shall enter that town to execute any of their powers to be done there unless for the defense of the Bailiffs of the same town and that the same Burgesses and their heirs and successors without any obstruction have common pasture for their animals and right of estovers of housebote and haybote with . . . of the country round about the aforesaid town in the same . . . of pastures and feedings as the same Burgesses and their predecessors common and estovers in their pastures and feedings ought to have, and from the time of the conquest of Wales made by our aforesaid great great grandfather the same common and estovers they have been accustomed to have.

Wherefore we will and strictly command for Us and our heirs that neither the aforesaid Burgesses nor their heirs or successors at any time shall be convicted by any lawsuits under any appeals of rights injuries transgressions crimes or calumnies or demands whatsoever imposed on them or to be imposed on them within the aforesaid counties but by the Burgesses of the aforesaid Burgh or by English Burgesses of the same counties and that the same Burgesses and their heirs and successors have our protection and that of our heirs in all things touching the Burgesses of the same town for the time being and those who live within the verge of that town so that no Deputy Bailiff or other Minister of Us or our heirs shall enter that town to execute any of their power there to be done except for the defense of the Bailiffs of the same town and that the same Burgesses and their heirs and successors shall have without obstruction common of pasture for their animals and right of estovers of housebote and haybote with . . . of the country about the aforesaid town in the same . . . of pastures and feedings as the same Burgesses and their predecessors common and estovers aforesaid in pastures and feedings ought to have from the time of the conquest of Wales made by our great great grandfather and the same estovers as they have been accustomed to have as is aforesaid to which are witnesses these venerable fathers T. Archbishop of Canterbury primate of all England our Chancellor Thomas Bishop of Exeter our Treasurer John King of Castille and Lyons Duke of Lancaster Edmund Earl of Cambridge Thomas of Wodestock Earl of Buckingham our most beloved uncle Richard Arundell Thomas de Beauchamp Earl of Warwick William de Beauchamp our Chamberlaine Hugh de Segrave Seneschall of our Hospital John de Fordham Keeper of our Privy Seal and others Given under our hand at Westminster on the 12th day of June in the 3rd year of our reign. We also the concessions and confirmations aforesaid and all and singular ratifications possessions and grants contained in the aforesaid Charter for us and our heirs as far as in us lieth accept approve and now to the Burgesses of the aforesaid Burgh and their heirs and successors according to the tenor of these presents to concede and confirm as the aforesaid charter strictly testifies and as the same Burgesses the liberties and freedoms contained in the aforesaid charter ought to use and enjoy both they themselves and their ancestors and predecessors Burgesses of the aforesaid Burgh their liberties and freedoms from the time of the grant and confirmation aforesaid have been accustomed strictly to use and enjoy in testimony of which thing we have caused these our letters patent to be made Witness at Westminster on the 12th day of May in the 3rd year of our reign. We also the said letters patent of concessions and confirmations of these Kind of liberties and freedoms not in the smallest degree revoked by the advice and assent of the Lords spiritual and temporal in our Parliament at Westminster held in the 1st year of our reign now sitting approve ratify and confirm as the aforesaid letters strictly testify and as the same Burgesses the aforesaid liberties and freedoms

out to use and enjoy both they themselves and their ancestors and predecessors Burgesses of the aforesaid Burgh their liberties and freedoms from the time of their grant and confirmation aforesaid have been strictly accustomed to use and enjoy. In testimony of which thing we have caused these our letters patent to be made Witness myself at Leicester on the 21st day of February in the 4th year of our reign. We also the aforesaid charters and all and singular ratifications possessions and grants in them contained for us and our heirs as far as in us lieth accept and approve and to our well beloved Burgesses of the aforesaid town and to their heirs according to the tenor of these presents do grant and confirm as the aforesaid charter in itself strictly testifies Of which witness the King at Westminster on the 20th day of November [1258]’.

The source of much of the political power wielded by the county families down to the nineteenth century was attributable as much to their influence in those boroughs such as Aberystwyth which—together with Adpar, Cardigan, Lampeter and Tregaron, formed a parliamentary constituency, as to the extent of their real estate. As we shall see later the amount of strife which existed between the leading families depended largely on their ability or inability to ‘control’ the electorate, unless, of course, the rival party proved sufficiently accommodating. A satisfactory arrangement was sometimes arrived at in a case where a particularly influential squire had no political ambitions and his son and heir was yet a minor. Otherwise we find that each family in turn strove hard to acquire burgages within the boroughs and to secure thereby for their tenants the right to vote in municipal and parliamentary elections.

The imposition of law and order was the prerequisite of any attempt (be it Plantagenet or Tudor) to set up an effective central government, and this in turn depended largely on the degree of co-operation given by the local *uchelwyr*, who filled the more important appointments in exchange for certain perquisites of office. The continual struggle for local power between neighbouring families in Cardiganshire, as elsewhere, sometimes developed into serious feuds which occasionally resulted in the violent death of one or other of the participants. The old order of vengeance (founded on the principle of an eye for an eye) no doubt died hard among the aggrieved, but gradually gave way to the less satisfying but more ethical conditions enforced by a legal settlement. Such an incident, with the consequent security measures adopted, is revealed in the following bond (No. 1582) between members of the Prothe and Glays families. Although the Ieuan ap David Rethergh [Rhydderch] mentioned therein is not satisfactorily identified, he may have been one of the Gogerddan family. The document, which is one of the earliest in English contained in the collection, is particularly interesting for the light it throws on some of the customs and methods of legal settlement in fifteenth century Wales.

‘To all tho that thys wrytyng ended trip’tit schall se other here Wylliam Thomas Knyght and Gruff’ Nicholas esquier senden gretyng and for as muche as dyv’ses dissenciones discord and debats before thys tyme have

bene hadde betwene Jankyn ap John ap Gwelym Vaghan Gruff' ap M'ed' and Maude the doght[er] of Gruff' ap M'ed' late the wyf of David Vighan ap Gruff' proth on the on p'te and David ap M'ed' Glays John Robore M'ed' Glays & Thomas Glays on the other p'te and specially for the deth of Gruff' Prothe and David ap Gruff' Prothe Whereoff Jankyn ap John ap Gwelym Vaghan Thomas ap Gruff' Gruff' ap M'ed' and Thomas ap Madd' ben bowden to us in iiil iiis to abide ovr ordinannce for the oon p'te and M'ed' Glays Thomas Glays David ap Water Phelip Lawrens Thomas Chapelen Robyn Payn Thomas ap Oweyn Says and other—— bethe bownden in the same sume to abide ovr ordinans for the other p'te as in thayr obligaciones son' als therof to us. made hit appereth more openly knowe ye for the good rest & mene of pese to be hadde hereaft' bytwene thees partyes & for the eschewyng of grete inconveniens that were like to fall betwixte thayme. yf thees distencones & debats werne continued We ordeyne and awarde in thys mat' in the man' and forme that folowyth that ys to say that the seid Maude that was the wyff of David Vighan ap Gruff' Proth schall nev' sewe ne vex David ap M'ed' Glays ny non other body for the deth of David Vighan ap Gruff' Prothe and that the seid David ap M'ed' Glays schall pay or do pay to Gruff' Nicholas for the deth of Gruff' Proth and David Vichan ap Gruff' Prothe ccciiis to be disposed by the seid Gruff' Nicholas to the use of said Maude and to other of the Kyn of the seid Gruff' Prothe and David Vighan ap Gruff' Proth' as hit can be thoght by the discrecion of the seid Gruff' Nicholas of the whiche sume of ccciiis cli schall be payed to the seid Gruff' Nicholas on Soneday next aft' the fest of the exaltacion of the Crosse and the other cli to the same Gruff' Nicholas at Est' then next folowyng and that the same David ap M'ed' Glays schall not come in to the towne of Aberystwyth no in the towne no churche of llanpadarne vawr betwyxte thys and the seid fest of Est' and aft' the seid fest then for to be demened in his abydyng in the contrey there aft' ovr discrecion and that Jankyn Robory shall don an othe called a Sache Wt ccc men at Cardigan byfore Gruff' Nicholas the next Counte day Saf on aft' the date of this endent'es that he was nev' assentyng procuryng sturyng ne of Will' to the hurt ne deth, of Gruff' Prothe ne david Vighan ap Gruff' prothe nothur Sonote ne hurte non of hem but that hys comyng thed' at that tyme was for to kepe the pees and dep'te hem that were in debate then in as much as in hym was And that Ieuan ap David ap Retherghe the same day byfore Gruff' Nicholas schall don a semblable othe for hys excuse wt cc men for the deth of the seid Gruff' Proth' and david Vighan ap Gruff' prothe and that Jankyn Robory and Ieuan ap David Rethergh' aft' thay be delyv'ed owte of p'son and afore the day of the seid othys come not in to the towne of Aberystwyth ne in the towne ne churche of llanpadarne vawr and that the same david ap M'ed' Glays Jankyn Robory Ieuan ap David ap Rethergh' and Meredith Glays for this mat' fro hennes forthewarde schall bere the pees to Maude that was the wyff to David ap Gruff' proth' Jankyn ap John

ap Gwylm Vighan & to the doght'es of the sayd Gruff' prothe: And to all here other Kyn & ffrends for this mat' schall no bodely harme be done by hem ne by here sturyng and that the Sone of David Vigh'n & Maude schall nev' take sute ne vex the sayd David ap M'ed' Glays ne non other p'son for the deth of the seid Gruff' prothe: We awarde also that the seid Maude Jankyn ap John ap Gwylm Vighan the doghteres of the seid Gruff' prothe and the sones of David Vighan ap Gruff' prothe schall bere the pees to the seid David ap M'ed' Glays hys fad' Thomas Glays harry Glays John lln Jankyn Robory & Ieuan ap David ap Rethergh and that they ne non of her frendes by her excitation do no bodyly harme to the seid p'tyes ne to none of her Kyn ne ffryndes for the seid cause In witness wherof to thys award indentid trip'tit of the whiche the on p'te levith wt Jankyn ap John ap Gwylm Vighan & Maude late the wyff of David Vighan ap Griff' proth' We have put owre selys to the other p'te of the same awarde levying Wt David ap M'ed' Glays & M'ed' Glays we have put to owre seales and to the thridde p'te of the same award remaynyng in owre handes the seid Jankyn ap John ap Gwylm Vighan Maude David Glays & M'ed' Glays have put to her seales Geven the tyesday next afore the fest of the exaltacion of the seid Crosse the yer of the Regne of Kyng Harry the VIth aft' the conquest the xx^{the} [i.e. September 1441]'.

The Glays family appears to have been already well established in the neighbourhood and town of Aberystwyth in the fifteenth century, judging by the numerous references to them and their property. One such reference in a deed (No. 879) dated 4 August 1489 mentions David ap Meredith Glays,^{3a} one of the parties to the above bond, who, it is said, during his lifetime gave a burgage 'for his soul to the Church of the Blessed Mary, on the sea shore'.

Still another local family of some import during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was that of John Voya ap Siencyn ap John ap Gwylm Fychan, whose signature often appears among the witnesses to various legal documents of the period. His son, William ap John Voya, appears to have been much concerned about the material welfare of the church, for according to the evidence given by Griffith Lloyd ap Howel ap Rees of Geneu'r Glyn, on 19 April 1582 before the Queen's Commissioners appointed by the High Court of Exchequer to enquire into certain matters concerning 'the ladies mylne' within the town of Aberystwyth, 'the said mylne was made and buylded by the meanes of William ap John Voya and thother inhabitants of the said towne . . . for the maynten[a]nce of o^r Ladies Service wthin the said churche or chappell of the said towne of Aberistowyth' . . . (No. 726). His last will and testament (probate of which was granted on 23 January 1540) shows him to have been a man of not inconsiderable wealth, an ardent churchman, and, unless one misconstrues the last clause but one, a member of the new Church of England who yet kept faith with the old:

In the name of God amen. The seconde day of January in the yere of our Lorde Jesu Christe after the cownte and custom of the Churche of England xxxix^e I Willm John Voya in my hole mynde thowgh seeke

and infirme of body providing before remedys ageinste the ferefull oure of dethe in the trewe feythe of Jhu' cristen ordein and make my testamente and last will in fourme and manner succeding ffurste and before all thinges I bequeth my sowle unto almighty god the owner maker and Redemer of the same And my body to cristen buryall I bequeth to the fabrick of the Cathederall Church of Sainte David iiis iiid Itm to the ffather of sainte pat'ne is church vis viid Itm fabric ecclie' de llan ychayarn iis iiid Itm ecclie' de llan Elar iis iiid Itm ffabric ecclie' de llan vychangell castell gwallter iis iiid. Itm ffabric ecclie' de llan vychange gelynride iis iiid Itm I bequeth to my wedded wyfe a Doyre conteyning xx kyne and [lxxx] shepe which be in the custody of morgan Dew / Itm to my sayde wyfe a myll, willing my executors to make her wth xx nobles of yerely rent wth the myll upon the tenements Itm to my sayde wyfe the rentes of the ten'ts called crygie and xl shepe be wth Jankyn ap R' ap Gwelym / Itm the rent of llan ap Jankyn here is howse and the howse wherein Ieu'n ove did dwell to abyde in during her lyfe and all my howsholde stuff and she to take unto her charge and tuition John ph' Elizabeth ph. and Anne v'z ph' and after my sayde wyffs dayes I will the sayde howshold stuff shall remayn unto the asyde John Eliz' and Anne Also I bequeth to Sir Thomas Elon' my spyrytuall fader iiii / Itm to Sir gr ap dd xxs / Itm to my son lewis my purchess in mach'nleth as the state mencyoneth to my sayde son by me delivered and made / Itm to Elizabeth my dowghter iiii Kyne and xx shepe / To the working of the bridge at Berystwth xxs / Itm I will that xiii torches and xv tapers be made to the honowr of god to light my burying. The Residew of my goods not bequethed I give and bequeth to Richarde ph' / John ph' / and morgan ph' / my nepotts whome I ordeine and make my executors to leve my dettes and to pay my legaces aforseyde to the honowr of god and the welth of my sowle And sup'visors ov' them I ordein phelip Willm my son and Richard ap R' dd lloyd / Thees wittnes being present Sir Thomas Elon' my curat Sir morgan vychan Sir gr ap dd John ap gwelim wth many other.

The Pryses of Gogerddan traced their lineage back to Gwaethfod, Lord of Cardigan (*d.* 1057). Their arms were: Or a lion rampant regardant sa.; the family crest—a lion rampant regardant sa., holding between the paws a fleur-de-lis or; and their motto *Duw a'n bendithio* (May God bless us).

As far as is known at present there is no positive proof as to when the family actually settled at Gogerddan, or for that matter when the Plas was originally built. The earliest known deed [No. 3] (dated 20 October 1334) which includes the place name and refers to lands in the neighbourhood that may possibly have formed the nucleus of the estate, is one of three deposited at the National Library some years before the main corpus of deeds and documents was acquired. It is an *inspeximus* and confirmation in favour of Robert, brother and heir of Geoffrey son of Geoffrey Clement, of three letters patent.

The first, dated at Westminster 21 June 1290, grants to Geoffrey Clement the commot of Pennarthe in the county of Cardigan, in fee simple, subject to the rendering by the hands of the constable of the castle of Lampadar (i.e. Aberystwyth) 60s yearly; provided that he and his heirs with his men and tenants of the commot come at the summons of the King, his heirs and justices, or the persons supplying their places, in the expeditions into Wales, when necessary, as often as they shall be summoned for all suits, services, and demands.

The second, dated at Darlington, 15 May 1292, releases the said Geoffrey Clement from the annual rent of 60s, but still retains the services on all expeditions into Wales.

The third of the letters patent referred to, was dated at Westminster 28 January 1318, in favour of Geoffrey son of the above-named Geoffrey Clement, inspecting and confirming two charters of which the first, dated at Bristol, 27 December 1284, was a gift to Roger Mortimer (Roger de Mortuo Mari) of the land of Geneu'r Glyn extending as follows: 'between Redhyr and the river Gogerthan to Aber Candoure, and from that place to Helegenwendith and from thence to Thlevenant and from Thlevenant to Devy and thence to the sea, and from the sea to Elery, and from Elery to the old mill and thence to the river called Redepenne and from the Rydepenne to Redecastel and from that place by the road to Redhyr, to hold to him and his heirs saving to the King the four pleas of the crown and estovers and all necessities to be taken from the wood of Lyscoyt for the castle of Lampader, by doing service of half a Knight's fee . . .'

The second charter to be confirmed was that of Llewelyn son of the said Roger Mortimer, dated at Cardigan on the Tuesday after the Feast of St. Peter ad Vincula [August 1] 1294, granting to Geoffrey Clement and his heirs for the sum of £40 and three carucates of land in Coedmaur [Coedmor] all the lands and tenements in the commot of Geneu'r Glyn specified above.

The second [No. 2] of the three deposited documents is an inspeximus and confirmation in favour of John, son and heir of John, son of Griffin son of Robert Clement, brother and heir of Geoffrey Clement, son of Geoffrey Clement, of letters patent dated 27 October 1400, which in turn refers to the inspeximus of 20 October 1334 mentioned above.

The third deposited deed [No. 1] is a covenant, dated 3 April 1568, by John Wogan, Esq., of Wyston, co. Pembroke, and Dicell, his wife, to levy to John Pryse of Gogerthan, a fine of the manor of Geneu'r Glyn.

These deeds do not answer the queries of how, when and why the family of John Pryse settled at Gogerddan, but mention of them here may help to clarify the position later.

One of the most important of the antecedents of the Pryse family was Rhydderch ab Ieuan Llwyd of Parc Rhydderch in the parish of Llanbadarn Odyn. He was a man of some affluence and influence during the latter half of the fourteenth century, who held the office of 'bedellus' in his native Cardiganshire in 1387. Unfortunately there appears to be a conflict of opinion even among the more reliable pedigrees as to his immediate family. According to Dwnn, *Heraldic Visitations*, I, 45, 85, Rhydderch ab Ieuan Llwyd ab Ieuan ap Gruffudd Foel married

firstly, Marged, daughter of Gruffudd Gryg ab Ieuan Fychan, and, secondly, Mawd, daughter of Syr William Clement, lord of Tregaron (Dwnn, I, 15, 18). The children of this second marriage were Siankyn, Tomas, David, Ieuan, Phylip, Gwenllian, and Marged. One of the sons of Rhydderch was the eminent poet and scholar Ieuan⁴, but whether he was of the second marriage is questionable, for, as Mr. Thomas Roberts has already pointed out in his able treatise on the poet, Dwnn elsewhere (I, 28) states categorically that the mother of Ieuan ap Rhydderch ab Ieuan Llwyd *y prydydd* (the poet) was Annes daughter of Gwilym ap Phylip ab Elidir, thus inferring that Rhydderch was thrice married, or that the poet's father was another bearing the same name.

Ieuan ap Rhydderch is generally associated with two localities in the county of Cardigan. The earlier manuscripts refer to him as a gentleman of Geneu'r Glyn, while others of a slightly later date say he was of Glyn Aeron. Mr. Roberts suggests that as some of Ieuan's descendants settled in Geneu'r Glyn, the Pryses of Gogerddan forming one branch, it may be that he was born in Glyn Aeron and spent his later years in the former place. Principal J. H. Davies, however, was of the opinion that in all probability it was Rhydderch's grandson, Dafydd Llwyd ap Dafydd ap Rhydderch, who was really the progenitor of the Gogerddan branch of the family. In passing, it is of interest to note the association between the Clement family and the manor of Geneu'r Glyn, and the possibility that the poet Ieuan ap Rhydderch was the son of Mawd, daughter of Sir William Clement.

Whether Ieuan ap Rhydderch lived at Gogerddan or not, one may be permitted perhaps, to claim a certain blood relationship between that household and this most versatile of squires who flourished about 1430-70. He was the epitome of Welsh culture during the Middle Ages, and had received detailed instruction in Welsh versification and in Welsh literature. His father, according to Jaspar Griffith, gave his name to 'The White Book of Rhydderch' ('Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch'), which contains one of the earliest known versions of the Mabinogion and Welsh romances. This and other like manuscripts Ieuan must have often perused. In one of his poems, modelled on the famous 'Gorhoffedd' (Delight) of Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd, he boasts of his own extensive attainments which include, among others, a thorough knowledge of the Bible, the old chronicles, and the works of the earliest Welsh poets; grammar and civil law, French and the classics, astrology, geometry, harp playing (music), chess, putting the shot, jumping, swimming, riding, together with the onerous duties that fell to his lot with the numerous public offices he held from time to time. From certain references in this poem it may be fairly safely assumed that he was educated at one of the older universities (probably Oxford). Some manuscripts credit him with the authorship of an interesting English poem to the Virgin Mary, which, written in strict Welsh metre, is of particular interest to students of English phonetics.⁵

As was to be expected from a family of *uchelwyr*, the Pryses, always proud of their relationship with Ieuan ap Rhydderch, were generous patrons of the Welsh poets, who in turn sang their praises in the traditional style. While it is true that these poems were written to an established form, and many of the personal

characteristics acclaimed are common to most of the heroes, nevertheless, they may be taken and accepted as fair reflections of the accredited standard of conduct which really existed between a nobleman and his poet. Dafydd Llwyd and his son Rhys are extolled by Gutyn Goch Brydydd⁶ for their goodness of heart and generosity, but above all for their strength of character. Rhys seems to have been particularly well liked by contemporary poets. One of them, Lewys Mon,⁷ refers to him as Rhys ap Dafydd ap Dafydd ap Rhydderch, which rather supports Principal Davies's contention that Dafydd ap Rhydderch was the first of the family to settle at Gogerddan. Rhys appears to have been a man of a stern, decisive turn of mind, who was much feared by any miscreants of Llanbadarn Fawr. Of more than ordinary interest is a *cywydd* by Lewis Trefnant 'To Rhys Dafydd Llwyd when he went on a pilgrimage to Rome'.⁸ The poet tells how, heavy of heart, he has been ever watchful, gazing towards Calais, ever since his young lord left for Saint Peter's. Full of *hiraeth*, he tells of his fear lest some danger befall his patron on his way to seek the papal blessing and a remission of his sins. St. Padarn, second only to St. Peter, will ensure his safe return. His father will converse with none, except to seek some news; but the poet assures him that Rhys will soon be home again. His sisters are full of anguish, and Catrin (?his wife) likewise is filled with anxiety. Even the poet himself admits to his pangs of worry, although he knows full well that no danger will befall the pilgrim. However, when Rhys returns to his courtly home and estate, and hair again grows on his tonsured head, all will play the pipes of glee in an endless succession of happiness. The world will be the merrier when Rhys the generous is home again full of grace at Gogerddan. And may the lord and pilgrim have a long life.

Rhys's son Rhisiart is said by Sion Ceri⁹ to have been a stout [tree] among brushwood, while his liberality and commanding presence inspired Huw Arwystl¹⁰ to express these thoughts in a very fine stanza: Gold and wine, Rhisiart, you gave to the weak. Yesterday you were anointed with God's grace, and His countenance smiled on you; whoever was embittered—you tamed; and to the devil any wolf of a man who dared speak when your wrath was kindled and you had commanded peace.

For his munificence, says Matthew Brwmfield,¹¹ Rhisiart ap Rhys is the equal of Mordaf, Ifor Hael, and Nudd, and to-day he had not his peer.

This Rhisiart, who was the first to assume the surname Prys, and his son John are the subject of an elegy by Sion Cain,¹² wherein he enumerates the various public offices held by them. Of its kind it is an interesting *cywydd*, inasmuch as it reveals the poet's favourable reactions to the part played by the squires in the public life of Tudor Wales. There is, says he, cold anguish and great weeping in all parts of Deheubarth at Sir Richard's passing. It was a ninefold hurt to carry to the churchyard the sturdy and courtly Prys of Gogerddan. This man who boasted his lineage from Rhydderch, is there from among men of the nine counties an officer as powerful as he? A Justice [of the Peace] revered and pure, a generous and gentle Lieutenant, and Custos Rotulorum . . . Sir Siôn Prys after an unblemished life went to his grave as a saint. A gentleman of many offices, he was one of the Council of the Marches. Truly what living is there for a poet . . . He gave three gifts in one.

Such then, according to the bards, were the Pryses of Gogerddan in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—fierce and unflinching in the cause of justice, religious, God-fearing *uchelwyr*, proud of their responsibilities, and above all, generous.

APPENDIX I

Cywydd i Rys David Llwyd pan aeth ar Bererindod i Rufain
(Cwrt Mawr MS. 12, tud. 634-6)

Gwyllo'r wyf mae'n gul yr ais,
A'r golwg rhof ar Galais;
Pan aeth y mâb pennaeth mau
I dŷ Bedr da wybodau;
Y llew o gorph Dafydd Llwyd,
Ag o Rydderch y gwreiddiwyd;
Od aeth Rŷs i'r daith rasawl,
A bod ar ffordd Bedr a Phawl.
Llwyr y'm bernir mewn hiraeth,
Llew main i Rufain yr aeth;
Anturio wnaeth o'n tir ni,
Gael wyneb y goleuni;
A lle i ynnill llawenydd,
- A lle caid rhoi enaid rhŷdd;
Cael y grâs yn ddifasiwn
Gan y pâb ag wyneb hwn;
Cael cyffes cynnes y caid,
Er ynnill nef i'r Enaid;
Cael yn ôl ffŷdd gatholig,
Pardwn Duw rhag purdan dig;
Cael gweled er trwydded draw,
Y fernagl a fu arnaw;
Cafas ef yno hefyd,
Faddau holl bechodau'r bŷd;
A'i olchi 'ngradd gyfaddef,
Yn un o dair ffynnon nef;
Pedr a Phawl i'r freiniawl fro,
A Duw gwyn a'i dug yno;
- Padarn ail i Pedr o Nêf,
I'w dŷ gwydr a'i dwg adref;
Mae'n ofnog oludog wlêdd
Deau a chwbl o'i duedd;
Gofalus oedd Gyfeiliawg,
Yno ddewr hael na ddoi rhawg;
Nid a i'mddiddan â dŷn,
Dafydd onid i'w ofyn;
Bydd wŷch bu fynych dy fod,
Dafydd mae Rhŷs yn dyfod;
Chware wnai ei chwiorydd
Er wylo'r dwr lawer dŷdd;

Mae ar Gatrín gwedd hinon,
 Ofn a braw o fewn ei bron;
 A minnau a ddymunwn,
 Gael oed dydd a gweled hwn;
 Mwyaf cur dolur dilyys
 O fewn 'y mron ofn am Rŷs;
 Ac nid rhaid f'enaïd yw fo,
 Im Dwynen ofn am dano;
 Er aros mab arab aeth,
 Nid hir ond rhyw naturiaeth,
 Nid myned mewn tynged taith,
 Ddi wyl elw a ddel eilwaith;
 A'i moel gwr ym mol garallt
 Ai wâs gwyh i aros gwallt.
 Pan ddél Rhŷs i'w lŷs a'i wlâd,
 Gwallt a dŷf gwyllt ei dyfiad;
 Pawb a gant fal pibau gwydd,
 Ol yn ol o lawenydd;
 Llyna'r byd yn llawenach,
 Fod Dafudd law Nudd yn iach;
 Llyna râs yn llenwi'i ran,
 Ag urddas yngogerddan;
 Ac oes hir lle gwelir gwin
 I'r por aur a'r pererin.

Lewis Trefnant a'i Cant.

APPENDIX II

Marwnad S^r Rissiart Prys o Ogerddan
 (Peniarth MS. 117, tud. 5).

Mae oer alaeth mawr wylir
 Ymhoparth deheubarth hir
 Saith wae'r byd sywaeth o'r bai
 Syr Rissiart nas arhoesai
 Briw naw llu fu bwrw n y llann
 Braisg urddol Brys o Ogerddan
 Priddo Aer Sion pridd yw'r sir
 Prys gwr powerus geirwir
 Oeraï llin ar holl ynys
 Iach Rissiart praffddart ap Rys
 Iachau Rydderch wych ryddydd
 Eisie i gorff a las i gyd
 Gwnai i alargwnn i wylen
 gaeth ofid hil Gwaithvoed hên
 Briw drwy sir an nawtir ni
 braw ai tyf Aber Teifi
 duodd gwlad rad a rodien
 deau parth vaeth duw ai penn
 ni bu lai wynebol wr
 yn y did na hen dewdwr

Oes o wyr y naw siroedd
Swyddoc morr gefnoc ag oedd?
Ustus glain parchus glan per
Liftenant haelfyd tyner
A chwstws tra chostus trwm
wr tal o rotylorwm
Oerai n bro n erwin heb wres
Oera gwledd iw Arglwyddes
Trais fu weled tros vilwr
dâm Gwenn mewn du am i gwr
Aeres bennes y bonedd
Aber bechan glan i gwledd
merch Tomas ddifas ddefod
ap Rys glain pyrhaus i glod
Iach vorys wych a fwrir
ab Owen sad benn y sir
Briw a choel braw i chalon
Blaenau hil sy'n blino honn
Ag oi vlaen vo gyflawn vaeth
dwyn i haer dyna hiareth
Syr Sion vyw union vonedd
Prys aeth vel sant i bant bedd
A gadel gwiw Angel gwar
at y byd o blant bedwar
I Aer enwoc ir Ynys
Yw Rissiart pur awchddart prys
Aeth y gofid vyth gofio
enw i vam er i fwyn fo
Arglwyddes hanes hynod
wylo vyth y dylai vod
Kwyn merched hwnn gwnn i gwart
sy ressyn ddwyn Syr Rissiart
dâm Britsied Kolled i Kaf
wych enwoc yw r verch hynaf
Arglwyddes ail Empres lys
Sy n i law Sr Sion Lewys
Aeth Elsbeth yn ddi veth varn
ai thwf i lys mathafarn
mae Mari bo iddi r bel
wych byrsaur ar vraich Byrsel
A Chatrin heilwin helaeth
ir vynachlog enwog aeth
dyna r had da iawn yw r rhol
hil Syr Rissiart lwys rassol
Un or Kyngor breisgior brau
or mars oedd wr mawr swyddau
Briw Kannyn lle bu r Kynnal
breuddwyd oer fu briddo i dâl
O chloed hydd och wlad heddyw
beth a wna bardd byth yn byw
poen oer ag anap ynn oedd
od yw poen vod heb punnoedd
Troi ar unwaith tra rannai
teirodd yn unrhodd a wnai

Braw ym a roed briwai mronn
 bardd gwyl wyf brudd i galon
 na bae ef uwch neb ifaink
 ni bydd na chywydd na chaink
 Rheidiach lle trymach t[r]jamwy
 a chwyn mawr na chanu mwy
 dwyn dau vroder Kallber ku
 ai dau Aer iw daiaru
 Och weled yn iach haelwyr
 anrhaith ar unwaith ar wyr
 ni vynnai Krist hirdrist hawl
 dan bedwar blodeun bydawl
 Od ae r gwyr mewn dir gariad
 i law un duw hael iawn dad
 Rhoed duw gwynn rhad digonol
 râs a nerth ir rhai sy n ol.

Sion Kain.

NOTES

¹ Cardiganshire was originally divided into ten commotes of which the three northernmost were Geneu'r Glyn, extending from the river Dovey to the Clarach, Perfedd, from the Clarach to the Rheidol, and Creuddyn, from the Rheidol to the Ystwyth.

² cf. Lloyd, J. E., *The Story of Ceredigion* (1937), p. 53.

³ Lewis, F. R., *The History of Llanbadarn Fawr, Cardiganshire, in the later Middle Ages* (1938), p. 4.

^{3a} For a fuller appreciation of the character of Dafydd ap Maredudd Glais (*fl.* 1429–68) see *Y Bywgraffiadur Cymreig* (Llundain, 1953) pp. 89–90.

⁴ A critical edition of his poems, with an introduction and notes, by Mr. Thomas Roberts, is included in *Iolo Goch ac eraill* (Caerdydd, 1937), to which I am greatly indebted for information concerning the family of Ieuan ap Rhydderch.

⁵ A copy preserved in the British Museum was published by Sir H. Idris Bell, with metrical notes by J. Glyn Davies, in *Anglia*, Band 36 (1912) p. 116 seq. The poem is also attributed to Ieuan Swrdwal and Hywel ab Ieuan Swrdwal. Several copies are preserved among manuscripts now at the National Library of Wales, including Peniarth MSS. 96 (149), 98 (69), 111(286), Panton MSS. 33(127), 42(159), and Llanstephan 47(36), 53(461), 54 (155). The opening stanza of the version to be found in Cwrt Mawr MS. 11, pp. 586–95, reads thus:

O michti Ladi, our leding to haf
 At hefn our abeiding;
 Yntw ddei ffest everlesting
 I set a braynts us to bring.

⁶ 'Cywydd i Dafydd Llwyd a'i fab Rhys o Ogerddan', Cwrt Mawr MS. 12, (631.)

⁷ 'Cywydd i Rys Dafydd Llwyd o Ogerddan', Cwrt Mawr MS. 12, (632.)

⁸ See Appendix I.

⁹ 'Cywydd i Risiart ap Rhys ap Dafydd Llwyd o Ogerddan', gan Siôn Ceri, A.D. 1520, Cwrt Mawr MS 12, (623.)

¹⁰ 'Awdl i'r un Risiart ap Rhys ap Dafydd Llwyd', Cwrt Mawr MS. 12, (624.)

¹¹ 'Cywydd i'r unrhyw Risiart ap Rys o Ogerddan', Cwrt Mawr MS. 12, (692.)

¹² See Appendix II.

DAVID JENKINS.