

<b>Institution: University of Wales</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 28 Modern Languages and Linguistics (Celtic Studies)</b>
<b>Title of case study: The Poetry of Guto'r Glyn</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>This project has contributed to Welsh culture by increasing appreciation of the poetry of one of the finest exponents of the bardic tradition, by using that poetry to promote understanding of the literature and history of medieval Wales, and by collaborating with other organisations to further their promotion of Wales's cultural heritage. Impact has been achieved by innovative use of digital technology and by dissemination focusing on significant sites and artefacts featured in the poetry.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The aim of the research project was to produce a new edition of the poetry of Guto'r Glyn, a fifteenth-century Welsh praise poet. The project team, led by Dr Ann Parry Owen, consisted of seven academic staff at CAWCS, five of whom (Edwards, Johnston, Lewis, Parry Owen and Salisbury) are included in its REF 2014 submission with outputs deriving from this project, as well as one academic at Cardiff University (D. F. Evans), and a technical officer at Swansea University. The project has produced a new critical edition of some 135 poems, published in electronic format on an open-access bilingual website, <a href="http://www.gutorglyn.net">www.gutorglyn.net</a> (launched September 2012), together with an associated website presenting the historical background on the basis of the poetry, 'Cymru Guto / Guto's Wales', and an edited volume of interpretive articles. The electronic edition builds on the technology pioneered by a similar online resource for Dafydd ap Gwilym's poetry produced under Johnston's leadership at Swansea University (2002-7). Various viewing options make it possible to meet the needs of differing user groups. The edited texts can be viewed alongside modern Welsh paraphrases or English translations, with recorded readings, textual notes and explanatory notes in both Welsh and English, transcriptions of key manuscript texts with digital images, stemmata illustrating manuscript relationships, and detailed notes on patrons and subjects of the poems.</p> <p>The edited poems, based on comparison of all available manuscripts, represent a major improvement on the previous standard edition (1939), engaging with the many textual complexities and presenting dependable and coherent critical texts of Guto's poetry for the first time. The paraphrases, translations and notes offer authoritative interpretation and contextualisation based on substantial original research, opening up the poetry as a rich historical resource. 'Guto's Wales' contains articles on various aspects of the culture of the Welsh gentry in the 15<sup>th</sup> century illustrated by passages from Guto's poems, together with an interactive map locating patrons' houses and an animation showing Guto performing one of his poems at Cochwillan, a surviving medieval hall house. This animation, written and designed by CAWCS staff in consultation with Mr Richard Suggett of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, is the first academically-informed attempt to reconstruct the performance of medieval Welsh poetry.</p> <p>Although the electronic edition was not launched until near the end of the project, interim texts and materials were used to disseminate the research at public events and with institutional partners over the five years.</p> <p><i>Evidence of quality</i></p> <p>The project was partly funded by an AHRC grant to Dr Ann Parry Owen of £879K over five years 2008-12. It built on CAWCS's strong track-record of editions of medieval Welsh poetry as evidenced by the two series, 'Beirdd y Tywysogion' (1991-6) and 'Beirdd yr Uchelwyr' (1994-).</p>
<p><b>3. References to the research</b></p> <p>Ann Parry Owen (general editor), Guto'r Glyn.net, <a href="http://www.gutorglyn.net">www.gutorglyn.net</a> and Cymru Guto / Guto's</p>

## Impact case study (REF3b)

Wales, [www.guto.tth2.co.uk](http://www.guto.tth2.co.uk) (launched September 2012). (Listed in REF2 under Parry Owen etc).

Dylan Foster Evans, Barry J. Lewis and Ann Parry Owen (eds), '*Gwalch Cywyddau Gwŷr*': *Ysgrifau ar Guto'r Glyn a Chymru'r Bymthegfed Ganrif / Essays on Guto'r Glyn and Fifteenth-Century Wales* (Aberystwyth, 2013). (Listed in REF2 under Lewis).

H. M. Griffiths and E. Salisbury, ' "The tears I shed were Noah's flood": Medieval Genre, Floods and the Fluvial Landscape in the Poetry of Guto'r Glyn', *Journal of Historical Geography*, (2013), 94-104 (first published online 6.12.12, see <<http://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-historical-geography/>>).

#### 4. Details of the impact

This project has had impact on two levels: impact produced by direct dissemination to the general public through the electronic edition and through public events and school visits, and impact produced by supporting cultural organisations to enhance promotion of the sites and collections in their care. From the outset the project has been undertaken in collaboration with cultural organisations, the National Library of Wales [NLW] and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales [RCAHMW] being formal partners in the AHRC application.

NLW have provided several hundred digitised images of manuscripts from their holdings, and we have worked with the Head of Digital Development and his staff to link our electronic edition directly to the images in the NLW digital repository, thus enhancing their resource by providing transcriptions and context. NLW now uses the Guto'r Glyn Project as a standard of good practice in their provision of digital images for manuscript-based research projects.

RCAHMW has custody of records relating to the built environment of Wales, including a number of the houses which were the locations for and subjects of Guto's poems. The project has benefitted from their expertise and has also contributed new knowledge to their records. Cross-references to sites mentioned in the poems have been added to Coflein, RCAHMW's online database which received 300,000 page hits in the first quarter of 2013, and RCAHMW produced an exhibition panel on houses described by Guto for use at the National Eisteddfod, the Royal Welsh Show and other public events (2011-13). Richard Suggett, RCAHMW Senior Investigator Historic Buildings, has used texts produced by the project in his publications on interpretation of fifteenth-century houses: 'Living like a lord: greater houses and social emulation in late-medieval Wales' in *The Medieval Great House*, ed. Malcolm Airs and P. S. Barnwell (Rewley House Studies in the Historic Environment I, 2011), pp. 81-95, and 'Creating the architecture of happiness in late-medieval Wales' in *Essays on Guto'r Glyn and Fifteenth-Century Wales*, pp. 393-428. This impact was the result of detailed discussions with members of the project team comparing RCAHMW records and drawings with descriptions of houses and furniture in the poetry.

Richard Suggett collaborated with our project team in the design of the Cochwillan animation, which represents a significant advance on previous computer-generated depictions of medieval houses in that it shows the building in a living cultural context with accurate reproductions of contemporary furniture. The animation was produced by the commercial graphic design company See3D, with interactive resources developed by Technoleg Taliesin providing text and translation of the poem recited and information on artefacts produced by members of the project team.

The animation was presented to an audience of heritage practitioners at the RCAHMW's 'Digital Past' conference in 2012. It is available on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=620m8-->

## Impact case study (REF3b)

[EP5U](#)) as well as on the 'Guto's Wales' site, and has been used in 2012/13 by Eurig Salisbury, Children's Poet of Wales, in his sessions in five schools (involving a total of about 125 pupils) to demonstrate the original context for the performance of Welsh court poetry. Responses from schools indicate that it helps pupils to imagine a real setting for a bardic tradition which can otherwise be quite abstract. For a report on sessions in two schools local to Cochwillan, Llanllechid Primary School and Tryfan Secondary School, see Salisbury's blog on the 'Bardd Plant Cymru' website, <http://barddplantcymru.co.uk/ysgol-llanllechid-ysgol-tryfan-a-gutor-glyn/>, which reports on the creative work done with pupils on the basis of Guto'r Glyn's poetry. In addition to their intrinsic cultural value, these sessions can also be seen to have a positive effect on pupils' attitudes towards the Welsh literary tradition by enabling them to experience it through the medium of the latest digital technology.

Salisbury also led a tour of Anglesey in June 2013 on behalf of the literature promotion agency Llenyddiaeth Cymru, visiting sites of houses which feature in Guto'r Glyn's poetry, some of them identified and located for the first time. One of the new poems published for the first time by this project (Guto'r Glyn.net poem 64) enabled him to provide location and context for Guto's famous bardic contention with Llywelyn ap Gutun.

Throughout the five years of the project the team held public conferences and fora to raise awareness of the research, initially in Aberystwyth (2008 and 2009), and then in three locations which feature significantly in the poetry, Llangollen (2010), Raglan (2011) and Strata Florida (2012), attracting audiences of 60-70 on each occasion. Each of these events included a visit to a site in the care of Cadw, Valle Crucis Abbey, Raglan Castle and Strata Florida Abbey, supporting Cadw's mission to promote appreciation of such monuments. The programmes brought architectural historians into dialogue with literary scholars in order to contextualise the poetry associated with the site. Cadw's Lifelong Learning Manager has testified that our forum at Raglan in 2011, and specifically Edwards's paper on feasting in Guto's poetry, inspired her to put on a medieval wine-tasting at the castle, and to propose joint organisation of the open day at Strata Florida in May 2012 (an event repeated in September 2013). Edwards subsequently provided information on wines mentioned in the poetry to the wine merchant responsible for the wine-tasting event at Raglan Castle in 2012.

The final project conference in September 2012 included an evening of performances of some of the new texts of Guto's poems by Datgeiniaeth, a group specialising in recitals of medieval Welsh strict-metre poetry to accompaniment based on the music of the Robert ap Huw manuscript. This event built on a workshop on performance of poetry held at Bangor University in May 2009 which was co-organised by Dafydd Johnston under the AHRC 'Beyond Text' scheme (see articles by Johnston and Peter Greenhill in *Studia Celtica* 45, 2011). The project has thus helped performers to develop and promote their work.

The conference in September 2012 was also the occasion for the launch of the electronic edition, Guto'r Glyn.net. Although this website has only been available for less than a year of the impact period, statistics from Google Analytics indicate that usage has been increasing gradually, with 1,750 unique users from 38 different countries around the world. Students of Celtic Studies from outside Wales particularly appreciate the bilingual site, the option to view text and translation in parallel, and to listen to a reading showing how the poem would have sounded (testimony from Professor of Celtic Studies at University of California Los Angeles).

The edition is also being used in HE teaching in Wales (Cardiff, Aberystwyth, Swansea), increasing the resources available for the study of medieval Welsh poetry and providing students with the material for independent in-depth study of various aspects such as manuscripts, language and historical background. A module on 15<sup>th</sup>-century Wales based on Guto'r Glyn.net and Guto's Wales has been introduced by Dr Rhun Emlyn of the School of History and Welsh History at Aberystwyth University, 'Dweud y Gwir? Ceisio Lleisiau'r Oesoedd Canol' (code HA32120).

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

The value of Guto'r Glyn's poetry for understanding of attitudes towards rivers and flooding in medieval Wales and potential lessons about human responses to natural disaster has been demonstrated by the collaboration between Eurig Salisbury and Dr Hywel Griffiths of the School of Geography at Aberystwyth which resulted in a joint article in the *Journal of Historical Geography* (available online from 6.12.12, see references above), and presentations by Salisbury at the Climate Change Consortium of Wales workshop at Gregynog in April 2013 and at the Future Climate Dialogues symposium in Aberystwyth in June 2013.

The Guto'r Glyn website was on a short-list of three online resources in the 16-19 age-group category of the Welsh Government's National Digital Learning Awards in June 2013.

Non-academic user responses to the website include enquiries from family historians, and we have established a partnership to exchange information with the 'Dating Old Welsh Houses Group', a volunteer organisation recording historic houses in Gwynedd ([www.datingoldwelshhouses.co.uk](http://www.datingoldwelshhouses.co.uk)).

The discovery of King Richard III's skeleton in 2012/13 led to increased interest in our work on Guto'r Glyn, since Guto's poem in praise of Sir Rhys ap Thomas (Guto'r Glyn.net, poem 14) contains contemporary evidence relating to Richard's death. When the wounds on the skull were revealed in February 2013 Johnston realized that Guto's account of 'shaving the boar's head' could be understood literally as a reference to a ritual cutting of the hair of a man whose emblem was the white boar. This information was passed on to the team working on the skeleton at Leicester University, was reported on the BBC Wales news, and was published by Johnston in the Welsh Poetry Society journal *Barddas* (April 2013).

Barry Lewis is quoted in an article in *The Observer* (10.2.13) on the threat posed by the HS2 line to the site of the battle of Edgecote (Banbury), citing the poetry of Guto'r Glyn and others as evidence of the historic significance of the site for the Welsh.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

Letter from the Lifelong Learning Manager for Cadw, testifying to the influence of the Guto'r Glyn day-conference at Raglan in 2011 on Cadw's learning and events programme.

Letter from the Professor of Celtic Studies at University of California Los Angeles, testifying to the value of the Guto'r Glyn websites for his students.

Copy of article on site of the battle of Edgecote in *The Observer* (10.2.13)

Email exchange in May 2012 between Dr Alaw Edwards and Tom Innes, wine merchant of Monmouth, showing how Edwards provided information for talk organised by Cadw on wine drunk at Raglan Castle in the Middle Ages.

The Head of Digital Development at the National Library of Wales will confirm that collaboration with the Guto'r Glyn Project has contributed to NLW's management of its manuscript digitisation programme.

The Senior Investigator Historic Buildings at the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales will testify to the contribution made by the Guto'r Glyn Project to the study of medieval Welsh houses.

The Deputy Head, of Ysgol Llanllechid, Bethesda, Gwynedd, will testify to the value of Salisbury's session on Guto'r Glyn and use of the Cochwillan animation for the pupils of his primary school.

The Assistant Head of Ysgol Tryfan, Bangor, will confirm the value of the creative work Salisbury did with year-nine pupils based on the poetry of Guto'r Glyn.