

Author's note to the present 2010 edition.

Because of growing interest across the world and because my investigative work is less widely-known than the conclusions and the translations of the Robert ap Huw Manuscript tablature that it led to,¹ these reports of the work (which have been available to the public at Bangor University in Wales from 1995 on) are being put online. The work on the instrumental music began in 1972 and was mainly finished by 1981. In 1991 I began writing it up for these reports and entered into the last stage in the work itself: canvassing the opinion of scholars and musicians who were specialists in fields that might potentially be related on whether or not my recordings and transcriptions showed up any field of music to be closely related. By 1995 it was clear that they had not and therefore that no important opportunities for extrapolation from elsewhere existed, so I began finalising some of the reports that make up this series of dissertations. Each dissertation takes account of developments and publications up to the date of its completion but I have not updated them for the present electronic edition. I think there have been few developments in the instrumental field subsequently,² but the reader should note that in respect of the vocal music, *cerdd dafod*, which I only began working on in 1993, there have been a number of significant developments since the dissertation 'Verse' presented here was completed in 1995, so that dissertation should be read very much with that date in mind.³

¹ As popularised by, for instance, the CD of my translations issued by Paul Dooley: *Music from the Robert ap Huw Manuscript Vol. 1* (2004).

² Paul Whittaker has recently made advances which impact on some of my conclusions. See his articles: 'Harmonic Forms in the Robert ap Huw Manuscript' *Welsh Music History*, 7 (2007), pp. 1-34; 'The Role of Robert ap Huw in the Creation of *LbI* MS Add. 14905' *Welsh Music History*, 6 (2004), pp. 62-86.

³ The main developments concern small details of particular types of *cynganedd* (particularly *cynganedd lusr*), increased differentiation between different metres, greater definition regarding phonology and, most significantly, much greater detail on Irish, Middle English, Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse performance. But none of those developments has required any revision of the conclusions on the instrumental music itself. The settings in that dissertation, then, stand in their function as a test of the deduced rhythms of *cerdd dant*, although they should no longer be taken as state-of-the-art in terms of vocal reconstruction. For an impression of more recent settings of mine (2009) view the informal debut performances of 'Datgeiniaeth' in the first eight of the videos at : http://projects.beyondtext.ac.uk/project_gallery.php?i=9&t=v

For this edition the paginations of the original dissertations have been preserved whilst the texts have been reformatted into Microsoft Word, with some loss of neatness in respect of page layout and the like as a result.

The immense size of the work has led to logistical problems in communicating it, so my writing has had to be quite condensed, and these dissertations are the only ones at this time that are sufficiently detailed that I am prepared to make them accessible to the public. It remains the case that both fields are desperately short of resources, both as academic disciplines and as performing arts. It was concern over the lack of resources that modern society had been putting into the investigation and attempt to retrieve the classical bardic culture that preceded our era which prompted me to undertake this work in the first place. By 1972 there was already a long history of high-profile promotional work done, calling attention to what can be viewed as the greatest ongoing failure of modern scholarship in respect of the past of European culture and art, but it had met with little response. Unfortunately this remains a problem today, despite continuing promotional efforts. I have worked very much in the spirit that it behoves us not only to care for endangered, vanishing traditions but to salvage what we can of vanished ones.

In fact one of my hopes on this for the future is that the products of my work will be used to help temper some of the arrogance with which modern Western culture regards itself in relation to other cultures, for, within the British Isles, modern culture came at a much higher cost than has been realised. It is now clear that *cerdd dant* and *cerdd dafod* were extremely refined and that many of their sophistications have not been carried forward and have never been redeveloped anywhere. It is not just the music that was made that was lost but the very *systems* of music-making, when in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the expensive bardic system which supplied society with a high density of carefully-trained professionals was abandoned.

It should be understood that the work described here was indeed investigative, not promotional. It was concerned with finding the evidence necessary to identify exactly what the music that was played was, in all its fine detail. In being evidence-based, my work was not concerned with using the text of the tablature as a prompt for the intuition, to produce a personal 'artist's impression' of what

the music might have sounded rather like. In consequence, the reader needs to be prepared to engage with a lot of technical detail. Another potential difficulty for the reader is the unfamiliarity of the field, which might be disconcerting if the reader expects to be able to deploy here an expertise in renaissance music, baroque music, folk music or whatever. It is truly a quite difficult subject, but it is also a very exciting, rewarding one.

I am extremely grateful for the unwavering encouragement and enthusiasm of Paul Whittaker, the late Peter Crossley-Holland, Roderick Cannon and of all my musician friends, including the just-recently deceased Mike Edwards; for without their positivity I would have found it all the more difficult to keep on at this massive project through all the years that the subject appeared to be generally thought of as a no-go, taboo area which threatens the status quo; and I would have found it quite impossible without the extraordinary patience and supportiveness of my family and other friends over the four decades.

Peter Greenhill 17.6.2010