

A manuscript copy of a collection for the Welsh triple harp by John Parry (Ruabon)

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A manuscript claiming to be a copy of an original manuscript by the Welsh 18th century composer John Parry (Parry Ddal/Blind Parry, Ruabon) (1710–1782) was recently found in Adolf Sjöden's (1843–1893) music archive in Västernorrlands Museum, Sweden. Some questions emerged from this discovery: was the original manuscript by John Parry and was it unique? To try to answer these questions, the manuscript was compared with other contemporary and later manuscripts and publications. Where possible, the origin of the tunes was examined. And finally, Sjöden's accuracy both as a copyist and a collector was evaluated.

John Parry and his time

In the 16th century Wales became incorporated into England under the Laws in Wales acts of 1536 and 1545. The Welsh were to be given the same political status as the English and thus could send representatives to Parliament in London. In Wales, Welsh and English culture became more intertwined than previously. However, Wales had a cultural identity of its own, the most obvious example being the Welsh language, which is of Brythonic Celtic origin. During the 18th and 19th centuries the idea that the cultural expressions of Wales were getting lost created a strong interest in the preservation (and construction) of the past. One part of this was the creation of a national identity through cultural expressions, as evidenced by the work of Augusta Hall, Lady Llanover, in the 19th century (Morgan, 1983, pp. 43–100; Lonnert and Davies Mikkellborg, 2022, pp. 407–418). Among the specific cultural expressions to be preserved were the *eisteddfodau* (Welsh cultural festivals), Welsh traditional music, and the Welsh triple harp.

There were tensions between the English cultural expressions and the Welsh traditional cultural expressions. Wales lacked higher cultural and educational institutions and London attracted those from the wealthiest sections of society (Kinney, 2015, pp. 39–40). Welsh gentry came to London regularly and brought with them the musicians in their employ. In the 18th century Welsh clubs and cultural societies were formed by and for the Welsh living in London. Music making was one of the important activities in these societies. The most famous of these societies was The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, founded in 1751 by Richard Morris (1703–1779) (Jenkins, 1959b).

The early 18th century saw the beginning of the publication in London of tunes referred to as Welsh. One of the earliest publications with tunes referred to as Welsh

was *Aria di camera* in 1726 (Kinney, 2015, p. 39, 246). The full title was *Aria di camera being a choice collection of Scotch, Irish and Welsh air's for the violin and German flute. By the following masters, Mr Alex Urquhart of Edinburgh, Mr Dermot O'connar of Limrick, Mr Hugh Edwards of Carmarthen* (Urquhart, O'connar and Edwards, 1726). This implies that the tunes could have been recorded by the different collectors, and it was probably Mr Edwards who stood for the Welsh tunes. In this publication, only the melody lines of the tunes were given. During the 18th century it was noted that much of the music regarded as Welsh had English titles and origins, and efforts were made to 'welshify' music – for example by translating titles (Morgan, 1983, p. 78). Thus, a tune could have several titles in English and Welsh. There could also be several variations of traditional tunes, connected to both oral traditions and printed traditions. Kidson (1910, p. 498) problematises that many tunes have been considered as Welsh on insufficient grounds; he suggests that many of the travelling Welsh harpers played a variety of popular tunes of the time which later became the repertoire of other harpers and thus were considered Welsh, and this was further established with the publications of Welsh music.

The most famous Welsh musician during the 18th century, and well into the next century, was the harper John Parry (Parry Ddal/Blind Parry, Ruabon) (Illustration 1). He was born in 1710 and was blind from birth (Kinney, 2014, pp. 40–41). According to Bennett (1898, p. V), he was born in Bryn Cynan, near Nevin, in Llyn, Caernarvonshire. This was close to the Cefnamwlch estate of the Griffith family and they were his first patrons (Lord and Davies, 2022, p. 44). He is reputed to have been taught by a relative, Robert Parry of Llanllyfni, and it is presumably in this early time that he learnt the traditional airs he would later perform in London and further afield. Parry was later employed as a musician to the 3rd and 4th Baronets Sir Watkin Williams Wynn of Wynnstay. When the third baronet died in 1749 his widow continued to support the Parry family until the fourth baronet came of age twenty years later. The Wynn family was the wealthiest and most powerful family in Wales, and Parry was not only a resident member of the household at Wynnstay but his connection to the family also brought him in contact with the highest members of London society. In 1743 the Parry family were living at Jermyn Street, near St. James' Church, where John Parry is thought to have played the organ. Parry became a member of the elite cultural life in London which included giving concerts in London and other cities, as well as teaching and publishing. Kinney (2015, p. 41) notes that he had so many students that there was a 'Blind Parry's School' of harp playing well into the 19th century. His influence, thus, on harp music of Wales continued well into the next century. Bennett (1898, pp. VI, VII, XII) names some of Parry's students such as Gryffudd Owen and William Williams. His example of a harpist of 'the Blind Parry school' is William Roberts, a student of Richard Roberts who was a student of William Williams. Parry died at Ruabon, Denbighshire, on the 7th of October, 1782 (Bennett, 1898, p. V).

Illustration 1. Picture of John Parry, from Bennet, *Alawon Fy Ngwlad* (1898), V.



John Parry published three collections of music. The first was published in 1742 together with Evan Williams: *Antient British music: or, a collection of tunes, never before published, which are retained by the Cambro-Britons, (more particularly in North-Wales) and supposed, by the learned, to be the remains of the music of the antient druids, so much famed in Roman history* (Parry and Williams, 1742). It was a collaboration with his amanuensis, the harper and organist Evan Williams (1706–?) (Griffith, 1959). The pieces are all Welsh traditional tunes; however, no text or titles are given and they are all called Aria (Kinney, 2015, pp. 42–48).¹ The tunes were set for the harp, harpsichord and violin, and also for the German flute and published with a figured bass. The foreword is possibly written by Lewis Morris (1701–1765), the brother of Richard Morris who founded The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (Kinney, 2015, pp. 41–42; Jenkins, 1959b). Richard and Lewis Morris were very engaged in Welsh cultural expressions (Jenkins, 1959a, 1959b). Parry and Evan Williams were both members of the The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, and thus active in the Welsh music making in London (Griffith, 1959; Herbert, 2009). In the foreword to Parry and Williams’ *Antient British music* Welsh music is traced back to the ancient Druids of Wales and Ireland. At the time an interest for the Druids was emerging, an interest connected to literature and ancient monuments. However, the tunes in the publication are mostly from the 16th and 17th century. This edition was the first of its

¹ Kinney (2015) has published the names of the tunes.

kind to publish Welsh music set for the traditional Welsh triple harp, although the pieces could also be played on other instruments.

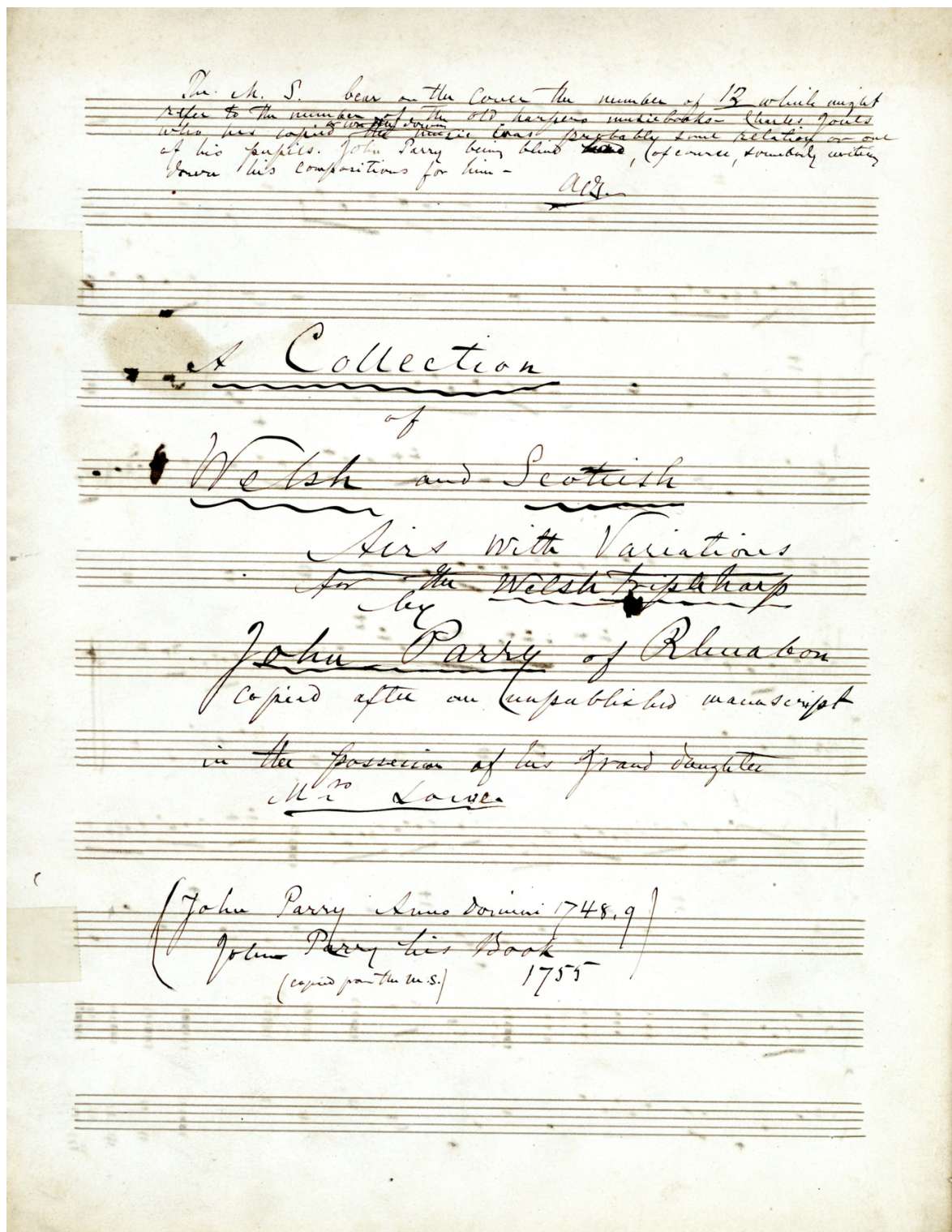
In 1761 Parry published *A collection of Welsh, English & Scotch airs with new variations, also four lessons for harp and harpsicord to which are added twelve airs for the guitar* (Parry, 1761). There are Welsh tunes in this collection, but also theatre tunes, Scotch airs and arrangements of pieces by Handel. There are four compositions for harp (Four Lessons) and twelve airs for guitar by Parry. These airs were also published in a separate print 1765 as *Twelve airs for one and two guitars* (Cooper, 2008, p. 101). Kinney (2015, p. 52) notes that the arrangements in *Airs* from 1761 are more graceful than the ones from 1742 and suggests they might reflect either a contemporary style or Parry's own style. The collection from 1761 does not have a foreword and does not specifically highlight Welsh music.

In 1781 Parry published his last collection: *British harmony being a collection of antient Welsh airs* (also published with the name *Cambrian harmony*) (Parry, 1781). It contains 42 tunes, most of which were published for the first time. On the title page it states 'The traditional Remains of those **ORIGINALLY SANG** By the Bards of Wales'; thus, in this publication the Welsh inheritance and place in history is as important as in the 1742 collection. The compilation and the variations to the tunes are by Parry.

Griffiths (2010, p. vii) emphasises the importance and different aspects of the three publications of Parry. The 1742 volume shows his contribution as a collector and preserver of the older Welsh repertoire. The 1762 publication demonstrates his life as a professional musician and baroque composer and in the 1781 volume he returns to his roots and the Welsh traditional music of the old Welsh harpers. Parry's central role for Welsh culture can be evidenced by Nicolas Bennett's *Alawon Fy Ngwlad. The ways of my land: N. Bennett's collection of old Welsh airs*, published in 1898. It was dedicated to Sir Herbert Lloyd Watkin Williams Wynn. The first 'Famous Welsh harpist' mentioned is John Parry and his portrait (Illustration 1, above) is also central in the beginning of the volume (Bennett, 1898, p. V). This can be due to the dedication where Bennett emphasises the importance of the position of the Williams Wynn family as patrons of the arts. However, this also shows Parry's importance at the end of the 19th century. Lord and Davies (2022, p. 44) suggest that John Parry's fame in London was crucial in the forming of the Welsh national music brand, combining a virtuoso technique with the idea of the continuation of the bardic tradition.

Description of the manuscript

Illustration 2. Front page of Parry MS, courtesy of Västernorrlands Museum.



The manuscript, here called the Parry manuscript, is a handwritten copy in the hand of the Swedish 19th century harpist Adolf Sjödén (Illustration 2). Written on the front page is: 'A Collection of Welsh and Scottish Airs with Variations for the Welsh Triple Harp

by John Parry of Rhuabon. Copied after an unpublished manuscript in the possession of his grand daughter Miss Lawes (John Parry Anno Domini 1748.9 John Parry his Book 1755 (copied from the m.s.)). It contains 11 tunes:

- Of noble race was Shenkin (p.1)
- Meillionen (p. 6)
- Os wyd Rhissiart (Sweet Richard) (p. 14)
- Pen rhaw (p. 18)
- Corphorllwyth (p. 23)
- Brÿd y brenhin (p. 31)
- Moses & Soloman (p. 36)
- Peggy grieves me (p. 41)
- The lass that is loaded with care (p. 46)
- The flowers of Edinburgh (p. 50)
- Scotch march (p. 52)

The manuscript has 56 pages. A statement at the top of the title page reads: ‘The M. S. bear (sic) on the cover the number of 12 which might refer to the number of the old harpers music books – Charles Jones who has copied or written down the music was probably some relation or one of his pupils. John Parry being blind, of course, somebody writing down his compositions for him – A.S.’. On the bottom of page 56, the last page, is written ‘Charles Jones his hand finished this book May 5th Anno Domini 1749 (note copied from the M. S.)’.

There is no explanation in the manuscript of the different dates on the front page, nor if there is a copyist other than Charles Jones. An explanation could be that a copy was made in 1755 from Parry’s 1748–9 manuscript. John Parry had two sons, David (?–?) and William (1743–1791) (Herbert, 2009; National Museum Wales; Lord and Davies, 2022, p. 45).² If the manuscript was copied from a Miss Lawes she must have been over 78 at the time, if she was William’s daughter. It is possible that she was David’s daughter, or granddaughter to one of the brothers.

² The picture in the National Museum Wales painted in 1770–1780 by William Parry might be John Parry’s son David with his father.

Adolf Sjöden, as a collector and as a copyist

Illustration 3. Adolf Sjöden with triple harp and Erard harp, courtesy of Västernorrlands Museum.



The Parry manuscript (F2:1 no 12)³ was found in the music archive of the harpist Adolf Sjöden (1843–1893) which is now held in Västernorrlands Museum, Sweden. Sjöden, who was born in Sollefteå, Sweden, was a renowned international harpist who also collected music (Illustration 3). He spent some time in Wales in 1869–1870 and was a member of Augusta Hall’s circle (Lonnert and Davies, 2024). The manuscript was probably copied during Sjöden’s visit to Wales. His visits to Wales and his contact with Welsh culture influenced both his repertoire and his career (Lonnert and Davies Mikkeltorg, 2022; Lonnert and Davies, 2024).

³ Refers to boxes in the Sjöden collection.

Sjödén's music archive consists of three parts: *Adolf Sjödén's musiksamling F1 Kompositörer* (29 volumes), *Adolf Sjödén's musiksamling F2 Samlingar* (10 volumes) and (Sjödén's sister) *Alma Edström f. Sjödén's musiksamling, Kompositörer F1* (2 volumes). In the collection there are printed music, different manuscripts copied by Sjödén, pieces written by Sjödén, and pieces written for Sjödén. Most of these pieces are written for harp. There are also hundreds of folk tunes from all over the world written in Sjödén's hand. Ten boxes contain music by Sjödén's teacher, Edmund Pratté, harpist, composer, and a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. There are several of the important Welsh printed manuscripts in the archive as well as collected or copied folk tunes from Wales. Among the printed collections there are Parry's collections from 1742, (F2:1 [1–22]), 1761 (F2:1) and 1781 (F2:1), E. B. C. Greenly's *Yr awen llwydlas* (F1:4), Edward Jones' *Musical and poetical relicks of the Welsh bards* (F2:4) and John Parry's (Bard Alaw) *The Welsh harper* in two volumes (F2:7; F2:6). There is also a copy in Sjödén's hand of Richard Roberts' *Sweet Richard* for two harps (F1:24). This piece was originally printed in Roberts' *Cambrian harmony*. Thus, Sjödén not only collected printed music but also copied printed music. After Sjödén's death in 1893 in Switzerland his collection of music found its place in the museum (now Västernorrlands Museum) in the regional centre Härnösand, close to Sollefteå where he grew up.

In order to assess Sjödén's accuracy as a copyist two different hand-copied manuscripts were compared to printed copies. The Sjödén collection contains a copy of Parry's *Cambrian harmony* from 1781. The first 22 pages are copied by hand by Sjödén (F1:10), and the remaining pages are part of a printed copy (F2:1). There is reason to believe that he copied this having obtained the parts of the printed copy when in Wales, and thus it is contemporary to his manuscript copy of Parry. An examination of the first piece in Parry's *British/Cambrian harmony, Mock nightingale or Dynwared yr eos* (Parry, 1871, pp. 1–4), compared to the manuscript copy in Sjödén's hand (F2:1, pp. 1–6) shows some mistakes although most of it is correct.⁴ There are some visible corrections and unclear writing. The most serious mistake is a missing bar.

Sjödén's (F1:24) manuscript copy of Richard Roberts' (1829, pp. 40–49) *Sweet Richard*, with a theme and seven variations for two harps, from *Cambrian harmony*, was also compared to a printed copy.⁵ There are some errors and corrections. There is a

⁴ Differences between Sjödén's manuscript copy and Parry's original of *Mock nightingale*.

Theme. Second part, bar 9: unclear writing: flag missing first beat, beaming wrong fourth beat.

Variation 1. First part, bar 4: unclear writing – second beat should be C-natural, written B-natural. Third beat C-natural corrected to B-natural. First part, bar 6: in LH the low bass in the first beat is written G-natural, should be G#; slur missing. Second part, bar 1: trill missing first beat.

Variation 2. First part, bar 1: last note C-natural, should be D-natural. Second part, bar 7: missing.

Variation 4. Second part, bar 6: in the bass line Sjödén has written quavers; the original has semiquavers.

⁵ Differences between Sjödén's manuscript copy and Roberts' original of *Sweet Richard*.

Harp 1:

Theme. Second part, bar 8: bar corrected inserted.

Variation 1. First part, bar 7: trill missing second beat.

Variation 2. Second part, bars 3–6: Sjödén has written the hands in unison, in the original the left hand is different from the right.

Variation 7. First part, bar 3: trill missing second beat.

correction in the theme, where a missing bar is inserted. In a few places some notes can be interpreted as two different notes due to the handwriting. In some places trill markings are missing. Several mistakes were made in the second variation. In the variation both parts usually have a pattern where the right and left hand play in unison, and copying mistakes were made where the pattern was broken.

It can be concluded that Sjödén was a skilled copyist who made few mistakes when copying, since few corrections can be seen in the manuscript copies. His writing is mostly clear and easy to read. But mistakes were made, and he does not seem to have proofread the copies. There could be several reasons for this. Maybe he trusted his own copying skills, or he just collected music for his own pleasure and did not need the accuracy. However, it is also possible that Sjödén copied other handwritten manuscripts, with copying errors, and not printed copies. The amount of copies by his hand in the Sjödén collection shows that he spent a lot of time copying music during his career, but there is no evidence that he played most of this music in public.

The Welsh triple harp

The Italian triple harp, a harp with three rows of strings, became popular among Welsh harpers living in London during the 17th century (Fulton, 2001). The instrument developed into the Welsh triple harp, and became the preferred instrument of the Welsh harpers, and Welsh harpists were employed by the English court from 1660 (Fulton, 2001). In an appendix to minutes of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, Sjödén describes the triple harp and Welsh music in an essay on the history of the harp:

The two outer rows of strings are tuned in unison in usual diatonic keys – usually G major – and the middle row, which is reached by putting the fingers through one of the outer rows – is made up of semitones, which correspond to the black notes of the piano. The Welsh bards composed a great number of powerful peculiarly beautiful melodies for this instrument, which are quite different in character from those of Scotland and Ireland. These melodies are extended with developed and difficult variations, in which the peculiar effect of the unison outer strings is used. And even Handel himself so admired this instrument that he not only used it in his oratorios, he also wrote numerous shorter compositions for it, as well as a Concerto in Bb. (Kungliga Musikaliska Akademien, Appendix to Minutes 1872-02-25, translation by authors)

In this description Sjödén also mentions theme and variations, the most common composition form for the Welsh triple harp during the 18th and 19th century. All arrangements examined for this article use the theme and variations form. The specific composing technique, where the outer rows of strings played in unison create a sound

Harp 2:

Theme. First part, bar 7: trill missing second beat; notes visibly corrected.

Variation 1. First part, bar 4: on the first beat, right hand, a C is written where it should be an A.

Variation 2. First part, bar 3: C-natural is written where there should be a C-sharp.

Variation 3. Second part, bar 6: note visibly corrected. Second part, bar 8: B is written where there should be an A; notes also visibly corrected.

specific to the triple harp, is also common in the arrangements (see example in Illustration 4, below).

The Welsh triple harp became the symbol of Welsh music, and several collections of music were published for the instrument. In the 19th century efforts were made by Augusta Hall, Lady Llanover, and her circle to preserve the harp tradition of the Welsh triple harp (Lonnert and Davies Mikkelsen, 2022).

The tunes in the manuscript in comparison with other contemporary and later sources of harp music

A comparison with Parry's and Williams' collection from 1742, *Antient British music*, and the Parry manuscript shows that three tunes are in both collections: *Meillionen*, *Sweet Richard* and *Moses & Solomon*. A comparison with Parry's collection from 1761, *A collection of Welsh, English & Scotch airs*, and the Parry manuscript shows that four tunes are in both collections: *Of noble race was Shenkin*, *Meillionen*, *Sweet Richard* and *The lass that is loaded with care*. Thus, two tunes are in all three collections. No tunes are the same as in Parry's 1781 collection. Similarities and differences are discussed below for each tune.

The publication of *Antient British music* was popular and in 1745 there was a proposal for a second volume of *Antient British music* focused on Welsh songs. This was never published. However, at the Royal College of Music in London there is a manuscript with Welsh songs for harp and voice, rediscovered by Osian Ellis. This might be a part of the unpublished collection (Ellis, 1991, pp. 54–55). None of these songs appear in the Parry manuscript. This manuscript also has a list of tunes that may have been meant for publication. Of these tunes, only *Meillionen* seems to be represented in the Parry manuscript.⁶

Edward Jones (Bardd y Brenhin) (1752–1824), was almost contemporary with John Parry. He was a harpist and published three collections of music. He was also a collector of music and folklore, dedicated to preserving the traditions (Morgan, 1983, pp. 44, 56). Jones was appointed harpist to the Prince of Wales, and later kept the position when the prince ascended to the throne (Kinney, 2015, p. 58). In Jones' collections of music, some tunes are the same as in the Parry manuscript but the arrangements are different.

Jones' *The Musical and poetical relics of the Welsh bards* was published in 1784 with a new expanded edition in 1794 (Jones, 1784, 1794). The subtitle to the collections is 'Preserved, by tradition and authentic manuscripts, from very remote antiquity; never before published' (Jones, 1794; also in Jones, 1784, with different punctuation). Thus, Jones' publication may rely on an older manuscript as well as on oral tradition. Two tunes are the same as in the Parry manuscript. In *Pen rhaw* the tune and variations are different from Parry's version (Jones, 1784, pp. 72–73; Jones, 1794, pp. 165–166). Jones' versions, which show minor differences, of *Of noble race was Shenkin* have

⁶ The list is on the final leaf of RCM MS 4861, a manuscript copy of *Antient British music part II* by John Parry, in the Royal College of Music Library. List obtained through e-mail contact with Jonathan Frank, RCML, 23-05-30.

similarities to Parry's version although they only include the tune and one variation compared to Parry's five variations (Jones, 1784, p. 75; Jones, 1794, p. 168). The similarities consist of a likeness in the bass line although this bass line is part of the melody. Kinney (2015, p. 58) and Rimmer (1986, pp. 83–86, 88) note that some of the airs in *Relicks* are related to Parry's published airs. However, Jones claims that the tunes have never been published before.

In Jones' *The bardic museum*, published in 1802, the tune *Meillionen* has five variations (Jones, 1802, pp. 80–82). The melody and most variations are different. However, the second variation has similarities with the fifth variation in the Parry manuscript. This may well be due to the harpistic style of the variation, a composing technique idiomatic to the Welsh triple harp (see example of this technique in Illustration 4, below). In *Hên ganiadau Cymry, Cambro-British melodies, or the national songs and airs of Wales*, published in 1820⁷, two tunes are the same: *Pêr oslev; neu Sweet Richard – Melodious melody; or Sweet Richard* has a different version of the tune and six variations composed by Edward Jones (1825, pp. 36–39), *Y Corphoraeth or The Corporation* (in the Parry manuscript *Corphorllwyth*) has a different arrangement and no variations (Jones, 1825, p. 43).

The harpist Richard Roberts (1796–1855) published a collection in 1829, *Cambrian harmony being a collection of Welsh airs never before published arranged as they were originally performed by the ancient Britons. Adapted for the harp & piano forte by Richard Roberts*. Three tunes are the same as in the Parry manuscript: *Corphorllwyth*, in Roberts' index called *Corphoraeth, or Corporation*; *Moses Solomon*, in Roberts' index called *Moses Salmon*; and *Sweet Richard* (Roberts, 1829, pp. 28–32, 36–38, 40–49). The tune called *Pen rhaw* in Roberts' *Cambrian harmony* is different from the tune in the Parry manuscript, and it can be questioned if it is the same tune (Roberts, 1829, p. 12). However, the arrangements of the first two tunes, *Moses Salmon* and *Corporation*, are almost identical to the arrangements in the Parry manuscript. The wording on the front page suggests that Roberts did not arrange the tunes but had collected arrangements which he then adapted. This is discussed later in the article. Bennett (1898) names Roberts 'the blind minstrel of Carnavon' (p. VII); consequently, being blind he also needed help editing his volumes. Roberts was a pupil of William Williams (Wil Penmorfa), who was a student of John Parry of Ruabon (Bennett, 1898, pp. VI, VII). Thus, it is possible that the arrangements are either from the oral tradition handed down through teaching, or that Roberts had access to a Parry manuscript. A third option, of course, is that the arrangements were written by Roberts or another harpist. However, when comparing the manuscript of Parry's arrangement of *Dafydd y Garreg Wen* (David of the White Rock), which was not published in any of his collections, with the arrangement of the tune published by Roberts, it is clear that these arrangements are almost identical. Roberts, however, does not attribute the arrangement to Parry. This strengthens the thesis that the other two published tunes might be original arrangements by Parry which Roberts published (Roberts, 1829, pp. 10–11; Parry, 2010, pp. 1–4,

⁷ The first part was published in 1820, and the second in 1825 (Kinney, 2015, p. 66).

facsimile on cover). Roberts' arrangements are compared to the Parry manuscript below.

John Parry (Bardd Alaw) (1776–1851) was a harpist and collector. He was not related to John Parry (Ruabon). John Parry (Bardd Alaw) published a collection called *The Welsh harper* in 1838. This publication also contains music by John Parry (Ruabon). *Meillionen or Sir Watkin's delight* has a different arrangement from the Parry manuscript and the printed collections from 1742 and 1761 (Parry, 1838, pp. 73–75; Parry and Williams, 1742, p. 13; Parry, 1761, p. 32). The arrangements of *Pen rhaw* and *Y Corporaeth or The Corporation* differ from those in the Parry manuscript (Parry, 1838, pp. 39–40, 120). *Sweet Richard or Per alaw–Sweet melody* is published from Parry's 1761 arrangement (Parry, 1838, pp. 131–133; 1761, pp. 1–3). In the 1838 volume of *The Welsh harper*, most pieces are from Edward Jones' published collection, and in the second volume, published in 1848, most pieces are from Ifor Ceri's (John Jenkins, 1770–1829) collections (Kinney, 2015, p. 163).

The tunes in the manuscript

In this section, the different tunes in the Parry manuscript are compared to Parry's other publications as well as other relevant sources.

Of noble race was Shenkin

In the Parry manuscript the tune is in E minor, in 4/4 (C) and has five variations. This tune was used in Thomas D'Urfrey's play *The Richmond heiress* from 1693, in which Shenkin sings to the harp (D'Urfrey, 1693).⁸ The harp has a melodic function in connection with the sung text, which was considered typically Welsh in London. In the play the song is sung in broken English and put into the mouth of a comic Welshman, Rice ap Shenkin. Henry Purcell and John Eccles wrote the music for *The Richmond heiress* and there is no proof as to whether or not a genuine Welsh air was used for Shenkin (Kidson, 1910, pp. 496–497). D'Urfrey reused the tune in 1709 (Kinney, 2015, p. 50). The tune was published in the ninth edition of Playford's *The dancing master* (Playford, 1695, p. 168). According to Kidson (1910, p. 497) the tune was first included in a Welsh collection in Jones (1794) with the title *The camp*. In Jones (1784) the title is *Y Gâdflys, The camp of the palace or Of noble race was Shenkin* (p. 168). It can also be noted that John Parry (Bardd Alaw) names it as a Danish air in 1841 although he earlier stated that he was unable to trace the origin of the tune (Kidson, 1910, p. 497).

This tune is also in Parry's collection from 1761 (p. 8). In the 1761 collection the tune is in D minor and has four variations. The harmonisation of the theme is basically identical, and the variations are similar to four of the variations in the manuscript.

⁸ There are other spellings of Shenkin such as Shinken or Shinkin.

Meillionen

Illustration 4. Part of Variation 5 from *Meillionen*, showing a technique specific to the Welsh triple harp. Parry MS, courtesy of Västernorrlands Museum.



In the Parry manuscript the tune is in G major, in alla breve, and has ten variations. The tune *Meillionen* (Welsh for clover or trefoil) is also known as *Consêr syr Watkin* or *Sir Watkins's delight*. It is said to be a favourite of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn (Kinney, 2015, p. 48). *Meillionen o Feirionydd* was published in the printed collection from 1726 called *Aria di camera* (Kinney, 2015, p. 39). However, the version in *Aria di camera* is a different version of the tune than that in the Parry manuscript (Urquhart, O'connar and Edwards, 1726, p. 33). The same tune from *Aria di camera* is also published in John Walsh's *Caledonian country dances* from 1750 as a *Scotch country dance* (Walsh, 1750, p. 38). This tune is also in Parry's and Williams' 1742 collection as *Aria XXII* (p. 13) and in Parry's 1761 collection (p. 32). In Parry's and Williams' 1742 collection it is written in A major and has one variation. The tune and the treble in the first variation are basically identical to the Parry manuscript. The bass line is different although there are similarities found in the arrangements. In Parry's 1761 collection the tune is written in G major and has two variations. The melody is the same with minor differences but the arrangement is different. In the first variation the treble clef variation is similar to the variation in the Parry manuscript. The second variation is different. Thus, there are melodic similarities in the three different sources in the theme and first variation.

Os wyd Rhissiart (Sweet Richard)

In the Parry manuscript the tune is in G major, in 2/4, and has five variations. The popular Welsh dance tune *Welsh Richard* was in the printed collection from 1726 called *Aria di camera* (Kinney, 2015, pp. 39–40). The melody is related to the tune *Wood Waltham Green* from Playford's third edition of *The dancing master*. It has been popular in Wales since the seventeenth century and is known in many different versions, including songs and dances (Kinney, 2015, p. 45). The tune is also known as *Per alaw*, *Per oslef* and *Os wyt Richard* (Kinney, 2015, p. 45). The melody in the Parry manuscript is different from the version in *Aria di camera*. (Urquhart, O'connar and

Edwards, 1726, p. 11). This tune is also in Parry's and Williams' collection from 1742, as *Aria XII* (p. 7), and Parry's collection from 1761 (p. 1) in the same key as in the Parry manuscript. In the 1742 collection it is the same arrangement of the theme, but in this collection no variations are published. In the 1761 collection the tune is slightly different, and the arrangement of the theme and the variations is different. Thus, the tune in the 1742 collection is almost identical, but the tune and variation in the 1761 collection is different.

Pen rhaw

The tune in the Parry manuscript is in G major, in 4/4 (C), and has six variations. The tune, or tune-family, also known as a variant of the Tudor English *John come kiss me now*, was popular during the seventeenth century and especially used for making variations on its ground (Kinney, 2015, pp. 23, 36; Kidson, 1910, p. 498). According to Rimmer (1986, p. 82), the tune is related to the sword dance 'The Buffens' (les Bouffons) in Arbeau's *Orchesography* (1967, pp. 182–195). The popularity in Wales may be due to its use in pennillion singing – a tradition that is particular to Wales. There are many rules governing the form, but the harpist will always play a traditional harp air and it is for the singer, *datgeiniad*, to recite rather than sing the text harmonically. It is a case of composing a suitable counterpoint and there are strict metric rules that must be observed (Gwynn Williams, 1971, p. 98). *Pen rhaw* is mentioned in a commonplace book from 1716–17 by Richard Morris from Anglesey (Kinney, 2015, pp. 36–37). Morris learned to play the fiddle, harp and he also sang. The songs in his book may have been learnt from oral tradition as well as from printed books. Kinney (2015, p. 61) claims that the tune was first printed in Edward Jones' *Musical and poetic relicks of the Welsh bards* in 1784. Jones' arrangement is different from Parry's.

Corphorllwyth

In the Parry manuscript the tune is in G major, in alla breve, and has seven variations. In Richard Roberts' *Cambrian harmony* published in 1829 (p. 36), the tune is called *Corphorlliouth or Corporation*. On the index page it is spelt *Corphoraeth*, and the note on the top of the page, 'Index of the airs. Wherein all the wrong Spellings are carefully corrected', might apply to the name of this tune. The tune is written in the same key and has three variations. The theme and the three variations are almost identical with the theme and first three variations in the Parry manuscript. Some of the differences may be due to mistakes by a copyist. There are a few minor differences in the second and third variations. There is a version of this song called *Love without hope*, which Beethoven arranged in 1810, published in *Twenty-six Welsh songs* (Kerman, Tyson, Burnham, Johnson and Drabkin, 2001).

Brŷd y brenhin

Illustration 5. The beginning of *Brŷd y Brenhin*. Parry MS, courtesy of Västernorrlands Museum.



The tune in the Parry manuscript is in G major, in alla breve, and has four variations (Illustration 5). The Welsh title can be translated as *The time of the king*. The piece has not yet been identified in any other collection.

Moses & Soloman

In the Parry manuscript the tune is in D major, in alla breve, and has five variations. The tune, originally known as *Monsieur's Almain*, has many different names in Welsh such as *Mounsier Salmon*, *Moses Solomon* and *Moes hen Salmon* (Kinney, 2015, p. 45). There are several Elizabethan arrangements of the tune *Monsieur's almain*, for example Daniell (Daniel) Bachelier's (1572–1619) variations for lute where the tune is referred to as 'commonly knowne by the name of *Mounsiers Almain*' (Dowland, 1619, n. p.). John Dowland (1563–1626) and William Byrd (1540–1623) also wrote arrangements of this tune (Holman and O'Dette, 2001; Kerman and McCarthy, 2014). In 1779 Richard Morris sent a list to Edward Jones where a tune was called *Yr hen syr Salmon* (Old Sir Salmon); thus, Morris had constructed a Welsh title from an English title (Kinney, 2015, pp. 38, 45). In Roberts (1829) *Hên syr Solomon* (*Her sir Solomon*) – *Old sir Solomon* (index; p. 27) and *Moses Salmon* (p. 28) are different tunes. According to Kinney (2015, p. 38), the original piece was not in contemporary printed English collections anymore and she claims that Parry and Williams believed it was original Welsh music when they published their collections in 1742. It is there called *Aria X* (Parry and Williams, 1742, p. 6). In the 1742 collection, the tune has no variations; however, the melody and the arrangement of the theme are almost identical to the version in the Parry manuscript. In Richard Roberts' *Cambrian harmony* the tune is called *Moses Salmon* (Roberts, 1829, p. 28). It is written in the same key and has five variations, and it is almost identical to the Parry manuscript version. The small differences may be mistakes by a copyist.

Peggy grieves me

The tune in the Parry manuscript is in D major, in alla breve, and has four variations. The tune is published in *Aria di camera* from 1726, and the melody in the Parry manuscript is very similar to this version (Urquahart, O'connar and Edwards, 1726, p. 23). The tune is also known as the Scottish tune *The bush aboon Traquair* which was published in *Orpheus Caledonius* in 1733 (Thomson, 1733, p. 3). Parry's tune is very

close to this version, and the arrangement of the theme has similarities. The tune was also published in James Oswald's *Caledonian pocket companion*, book 2 (Oswald, [c. 1747a], p. 17), which is close to Parry's version of the tune.⁹

The French harpist and composer Philipp Jakob Meyer (1737–1819) wrote a *Theme and variations* on this tune (Meyer, n.d.; Zingel, 2001). Meyer first visited Britain in 1772 and settled in London in 1784. Meyer's arrangement is different from that in the Parry manuscript. The tune has not yet been identified in any other collection of Welsh triple harp music.

The lass that is loaded with care

In the Parry manuscript the tune is in D major, in 3/4, and has two variations. The tune was published in Oswald's *Caledonian pocket companion*, book 2, with the name *So merry as we have been* (Oswald, [c. 1747a], p. 21). This tune is also in Parry's collection of 1761 in a slightly different version but in the same key (p. 46). The arrangement is also different with the exception of one variation. The 1761 version has three variations. The third variation, which has the comment 'this variation is peculiar to the harp' (p. 49) in the 1761 manuscript, has a great likeness to the second variation in the Parry manuscript.

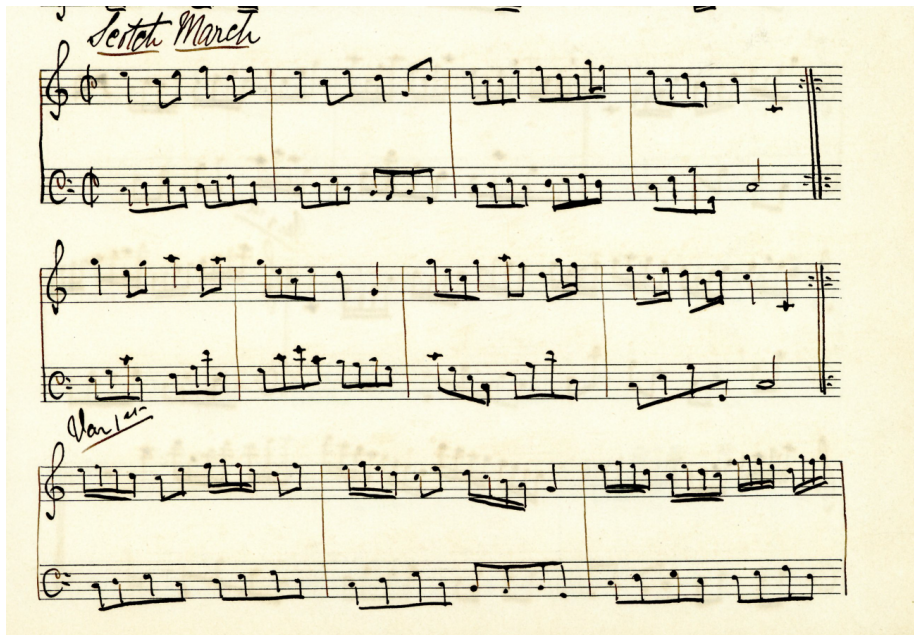
The flowers of Edinburgh

The tune in the Parry manuscript is in D major, in alla breve, and has two variations. A slightly different version of this Scottish dance tune was published in Oswald's *Caledonian pocket companion*, book 3 (Oswald, [c. 1747b], p. 19). *Flowers of Edinburgh* was also included in John Walsh's *Caledonian country dances*, volume 2, part 1 (1748, p. 294). The tune has not yet been identified in any other collection of Welsh triple harp music. According to Johnson and Melvill (2001), Oswald probably composed *The flowers of Edinburgh*.

⁹ *The Caledonian pocket companion* is a collection in six volumes which was published between 1745 and 1765 (Johnson and Melvill, 2001).

Scotch march

Illustration 6. Part of the Scotch March from the Parry MS, courtesy of Västernorrlands Museum.



The tune in the Parry manuscript is in C major, in alla breve, and has ten variations (Illustration 6). The tune shows similarities with many different tunes. Kidson (1890, pp. 18–19, 37–39) names different titles, such as *The Yorkshire lad*, *Well may the keel row*, *Smiling Polly*, *The keel row*, *Dumb glutton*, *Shamboy breeches* and *Charlie is at Edinburgh*. Collingwood and Stokoe (1882) claim the tune *The keel row* is included in a manuscript from 1774 and in a printed collection called ‘The Northumberland Garland’ by Joseph Ritson in 1793. These Northumberland versions of the tune were published before any Scottish version. Its connection to Northumberland also appears in the title, as a “keel” is a vessel which is only known on the rivers Tyne and Wear’ (Collingwood and Stokoe, 1882, p. 139). The tune also became very popular in Scotland. A comparison with the tune as presented in the handwritten collection of tunes called the *Buttrey manuscript* (1790–1840) shows similarities in the first part (tune 724). Here the tune is called the *The keel rewe reel*. Kidson (1890, pp. 37–39) does not have an opinion as to the origin of the tune. He notes that there are several different versions and suggests that an edition in 1748 might be one of the earliest. Parry, as seen in the title, refers to the tune as a *Scotch march*. This piece has not yet been identified in any other collection of Welsh triple harp music.

Conclusion

The style in the manuscript, here called the Parry manuscript, is typical of Parry’s style. It bears resemblance to other publications of Parry, and parts of the arrangements are similar or identical. The manuscript is not adapted to other instruments, as in many of the other publications mentioned, but is set for the Welsh triple harp. This might be because it is in manuscript form and was not intended for publication, so it was not

considered necessary to make adaptations for a wider audience. There are similarities to Parry's other collections when considering chosen pieces and arrangements. However, an interesting feature is the publication of Richard Roberts in 1829 where two pieces are almost identical to Parry's. An explanation could be that Roberts was a student of the 'Blind Parry school' and thus had knowledge of Parry's arrangements. As stated in Roberts' edition, he himself was a collector of traditional music from the Bards.

Parry was a musician central to the harp tradition of Wales. Another reason to believe the manuscript to be by Parry is the collection itself, which contains not only Welsh music, as emphasised in several other contemporary and later collections, but also other popular tunes from the time as well as non-Welsh traditional tunes. This reflects Parry's own repertoire, as shown in his edition from 1761.

The copyist, Adolf Sjöden, collected printed music and copied vast amounts of music. It is most likely that he copied the manuscript in 1869 or 1870, during his visit to Wales. Thus, there are reasons to believe the manuscript copied by Adolf Sjöden is a lost treasure by the 18th century Welsh composer John Parry. Some of the tunes are unique as folk tunes set for Welsh triple harp in the style of John Parry (Ruabon).

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Abstract

A manuscript copied by the Swedish 19th-century harpist Adolf Sjöden (1843–1893), found in Adolf Sjöden's music archive in Västernorrlands Museum, claims to be a copy of the original work by the Welsh 18th-century composer John Parry (Parry Ddal/Blind Parry, Ruabon) (1710–1782). The manuscript appears to be in the style of John Parry, with resemblances to his other published works for the Welsh triple harp, although many of the tunes in the manuscript are unique. Adolf Sjöden's role as the copyist adds an additional layer of historical significance, and the manuscript provides a glimpse into the musical traditions of 18th-century Wales. The discovery contributes to the ongoing efforts to preserve and understand the rich cultural heritage of Welsh music.

Keywords: 18th century music, harp music, John Parry (Ruabon) (1710–1782), Adolf Sjöden (1843–1893), Welsh music history.

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