

# The indexing of Welsh personal names

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Welsh personal names sometimes present the indexer with problems not encountered when dealing with English names. The Welsh patronymic system of identity is the most obvious; this was normal in the Middle Ages, and traces of its usage survived into the mid-19th century. Patronymics have since been revived as alternative names in literary and bardic circles, while a few individuals, inspired by the precedents of history, are today attempting to use them regularly in daily life. Other sorts of alternative names, too, have been adopted by writers, poets, artists and musicians, to such effect that they are often better known to the Welsh public than the real names. A distinctive pseudonym has a special value in Wales, where a restricted selection of both first names and surnames has been the norm for the last few centuries. Apart from the names themselves, there is in Welsh a linguistic feature which can be disconcerting to those unfamiliar with the language: the 'mutation' or changing of the initial letter of a word in certain phonetic and syntactic contexts. This can also occur in place names (see the other article by the same author in this Centrepiece). Some of the observations made there about the Welsh language are relevant here also.

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## Indexing English names

According to English practice a person is indexed under his or her surname. First names, taken in alphabetical order, word by word, are then used to determine the sequence of entries when the same surname recurs in the index ('first' = 'Christian' = 'baptismal' = 'given' = 'forename').

When an individual has no surname, his or her unique personal name (or regal name) is used as guideword, followed by any epithet which might aid recognition. Ordering then may be helped by the initial letter of an epithet. Single names may also be distinguished by the individual's place of origin, for instance Anne of Brittany, as distinct from Anne of Cleves.

The surname system in England reflects male pre-eminence in society. Marriage has normally obliged a woman to abandon her maiden surname and assume her husband's. Moreover, strict etiquette formerly demanded that when describing herself as 'Mrs', she should not use her own first names, but her husband's, before her new surname, unless she is widowed or divorced. This means that indexers may have difficulty in establishing the complete female identity of a married woman. Conventions, however, have changed as more married women have tended to pursue independent careers, sometimes retaining their birth name for business, sometimes amalgamating their own names with their husbands', and sometimes using their own first names before their husband's surname.

An indexer may face problems in the ordering of medieval names preceded or followed by *de* or *fitz*. The main criterion is whether the second of a pair of names has become a fixed surname; if it has not, the first name becomes the guideword. For example, 'Ralph de Chaddesdon' appears under 'R' and 'Edward FitzOtho' under 'E', but 'Fitzwarin family' under 'F' and 'Sir John de la Mare' under 'D' (the last, though French, being domiciled in England).<sup>1</sup>

## Indexing Welsh names

English conventions of nomenclature apply today in Wales as much as in England, but there are three circumstances where Welsh personal names may cause special difficulties for the non-Welsh indexer:

- where patronymics, male or female, are used
- where words change their initial letter
- the extent to which pseudonyms are used in certain activities.

It need hardly be said that when Welsh names are indexed in an English-medium publication, they normally obey the conventions of the English alphabet. In a Welsh-language context they will be indexed according to the Welsh alphabet, which differs from the English in some respects. Certain sounds (some strange to English) are expressed by means of double letters, or digraphs: *ch*, *dd*, *ff*, *ng*, *ll*, *ph*, *rh*, *th*, which stand as letters of the Welsh alphabet in their own right. The letters *k* and *v*, once found in Welsh, have been superseded by *c* and *f* respectively, and *ff* has virtually supplanted *ph*; *j* is used only in borrowed words, and there is no *x*. The complete alphabet of 28 letters is reproduced below:

A, B, C, Ch, D, Dd, E, F, Ff, G, Ng, H, I, L, Ll, M, N, O, P, Ph, R, Rh, S, T, Th, U, W, Y.

## Welsh mutations

There exists in Welsh a system by which a word may change or 'mutate' its initial letter (or sometimes its last) so as to indicate its relationship with a preceding or following word. The nature of the change depends to some extent on the sounds concerned, and also, in the case of nouns and adjectives, on the gender of the word (Welsh nouns are either masculine or feminine). This phenomenon is deeply rooted in speech and writing.

The present context concerns only nouns and adjectives used side by side, or nouns together in apposition. The second element in each case may be affected by the ‘soft mutation’ or ‘lenition’. Not all letters are involved. The top line of Table 1 shows those consonants that are liable to change when serving as the initial letter of a word. The lower line shows the forms they take when changed. It will be noted that the ‘G’ disappears altogether.

**Table 1** Soft mutations in Welsh

|               |   |   |   |   |    |   |    |   |    |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|----|
| Radical form  | C | P | T | B | D  | G | Ll | M | Rh |
| Softened form | G | B | D | F | Dd | – | l  | F | R  |

## The Welsh patronymic system

A person’s status in Welsh medieval tribal society depended on his or her descent in a kindred, and this had to be remembered or recorded. Since society was male oriented in landholding, custom and law, it was essential for a man to know the names of his father, his father’s father, and so on, as well as collateral relations.

A typical example may be cited from the 15th century: ‘Rhys ap Llywelyn ap Rhys ap Llywelyn ab Ieuan’ was a Beadle or Bailiff Itinerant for the King in the royal county of Carmarthen (Griffiths, 1972: 314). He was the son of Llywelyn, who was the son of an earlier Rhys, who was the son of an earlier Llywelyn, who was the son of Ieuan. The fact that he knew the names of his great- and great-great-grandfathers will appear remarkable today.

The word meaning ‘son’ is *ap* (used before consonants) and *ab* (before vowels); there is no need for ‘of’ in Welsh, since the genitive is expressed by the juxtaposition of nouns (there are no case endings in Welsh). *Ab* is a shortened form of *mab*, which may also appear in its mutated form *fab*; *mab* corresponds to the Gaelic *mac* and the Norman-French *fitz*. There was much repetition of names, in both alternate and successive generations (which is not peculiar to the Welsh), but it is particularly confusing to find sons of the same father bearing the same name as the father and each other. For example, a certain David ap Llewellyn (Anglicized spelling) had two sons, each named David. Epithets were added to distinguish one son from the other: the first was called David Goch (from *coch* = ‘red-haired’), and the second David Vychan (from *fychan* = ‘younger’) (Williams, 1961, part II: 71).

By the 15th century Anglicized forms of Welsh names and borrowed English names were becoming common, replacing in popular favour the older and more sonorous heroic names such as Cadwaladr, Caradog and Gwenhwyfar, some of which had survived from pre-Roman times. The spelling of names in documents, even when referring to the same person, was far from consistent. Efforts have been made to classify variants under standardized forms for modern listing; these will be discussed later.

The explicit sign of the male patronymic, *ab* or *ap*, gradually disappeared, but the idea behind it remained a widespread and powerful influence on naming practice for a long time. Between the true patronymic and the modern

surname there was an intermediate stage lasting from the late seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, when it was common to use a Christian name followed by an unfixed surname, the latter determined according to the old patronymic custom, usually the father’s Christian name, but sometimes the grandfather’s, or even the father’s and grandfather’s together. For example, the great Methodist leader John Elias (who died in 1841) was the son of Elias Jones, who was the son of John Elias. An allied phenomenon was the *alternative* unfixed surname, such as ‘David Morgan Huw’ of Trefilan, Cardiganshire, who was also known as ‘David Morgan’.<sup>2</sup> Such an entry will require a cross-reference under one or the other form.

There is an example from Glamorgan in a report of the Charity Commissioners, dated 1837, quoting a charitable bequest by a certain David Thomas of Eglwysilan parish, in the hundred of Caerphilly, by Will dated 16 March 1709 ‘to his son William David’. The latter is clearly a patronymic without *ap*, and it may safely be assumed that the father’s name was such also (Grant, 1988: 8).

## Women’s names in the patronymic system

A woman could be described as the daughter of her father, the daughter of her mother (less often), or if married, the wife of her husband, or his widow. She was not expected to substitute part of her name for her husband’s, as in a surname system, and it would have been ridiculous for her to ‘adopt’ her husband’s father’s name. Thus she stood in her own line of descent. The Welsh for ‘daughter’ is *merch*; in its ‘softened’ form *verch* (modern spelling *ferch*), it formed the link word between the daughter’s name and the father’s. So ‘Gwladys verch Ithel’ would be ‘Gwladys, daughter of Ithel’. In matrilineal descent, ‘Gwenlleian vergh Angharat vergh Mally’ provides an example with three female names in succession. *Verch* (or *vergh*) is frequently found in abbreviated forms, such as *vch*, *uch*, *vz*, *ver*, and *ach*. The usage has died out and there has been no attempt to revive it. Syntactically, the use of *ferch* should soften the initial letter of the following word, but this rule was not always observed in the case of proper names.

The term *verch* became confused with *ap*. An instance occurred in Cardiff in a document dated 1514, where a mention of ‘Amabilla Verz David ap Howell ap Jevan’ was endorsed ‘Amabilla ap David’, no doubt by a clerk whose knowledge of Welsh was limited (Williams, 1961: 57).

The next historical stage in the development of women’s names was the omission of the link word, *verch*, with the result that the daughter’s Christian name simply preceded that of the father. An example without *verch* may be seen in the parish register of Mydrim (Meidrim), Carmarthenshire. A certain Amy, daughter of Griffith David of Abernant, was baptized on 19 June 1745. She married David Bowen of St Ishmaels on 2 November 1769 and signed the marriage register as Amy David, but in the same document she was described as Amy Griffith.

Women’s names in early documents are far fewer than men’s. While there were certainly important and influential ladies in medieval Wales, women generally did not play an overt part in war and public life. Under Welsh law they

suffered the disability of not being allowed to inherit land, which rules out one source of prolific documentation.

Even so, in married partnerships the wife continued to be known by her original name, whether patronymic or surname. An elaborate memorial in St Mary's church, Tenby, Dyfed, commemorates Thomas ap Rees of Scotsborough and Margaret Mercer, his wife (died 1610). Another memorial, in Brecon Priory church (now the cathedral), records Elizabeth Morgan, the wife of Lewis Price, who died in 1704, aged 70. The historian of Brecknock, Theophilus Jones, stated that the custom continued down to 1805 in the western parts of that county (Jones, 1909, vol. 2: 25).

Lists of tenants can be a fruitful source of women's names. In the 14th century there was a large enclave of Welsh people in the north-west corner of Shropshire. A document 'Extenta Manerii, 1393', transcribed by W. J. Slack in *The lordship of Oswestry 1393–1607* (1951) includes the following names:

- Duthguy verch Ieuan ap Egnon (Dyddgu, daughter of Ieuan, son of Einion)
- Wenhorva verch Grono (Gwenhwyfar, daughter of Grono)
- Gwenhevar relictam Egnon Saer (Gwenhwyfar, widow of Einion the carpenter)
- Wenllian Lloyd (Gwenllian Lloyd; probably an early surname here)
- Wenllian verch Madoc (Gwenllian, daughter of Madoc)
- Wirvull verch Madoc Meillor (Gwerful, daughter of Madoc of Maelor).

The medieval scribe clearly had difficulty with Welsh names, and in four instances he recorded the mutated forms. This raises a problem for the indexer: should the variant forms (which all happen to represent the soft mutation of 'G') be indexed under the standard (or 'radical') forms beginning with 'G'? The answer here will be 'yes' from anyone familiar with the mutation, but cross-references to the variants could be useful under 'W' in order to guide the unknowing or to indicate the capriciousness of scribes. More difficult is the question of standardizing the whole spelling of a name, as opposed to rectifying a mutation. Various attempts at a solution will be examined later.

### The soft mutation in patronymic expressions

The foregoing discussion on the soft mutation anticipates a wider issue of the same kind. While each name in a patronymic chain is usually single, occasionally a noun or adjective may be added to a name to denote occupation, place of origin or personal characteristic. Such words may look like surnames (and at a certain stage of historical development they often became so), but at first they are simply descriptive. Another itinerant bailiff recorded in the county of Carmarthen was 'Gruffydd Wehydd ab Ieuan ap Gruffydd ab Ieuan' (Griffiths, 1972: 314). 'Wehydd' was not a surname, but an occupational description, from *gwehydd*, a weaver. The mutation is caused because there is a noun in apposition immediately following the personal name. The same rule applies to adjectives similarly used.

The epithet *tew*, meaning 'fat', might be applied to a person called Dafydd, and he would become 'Dafydd Dew'. The following examples of epithets attached to the name 'Dafydd' all occur in the index to *The principality of Wales in the later Middle Ages* (Griffiths, 1972):

- Fychan, from *bychan*, meaning 'small'. Anglicized into 'Vaughan', which was eventually used as a surname and Christian name.
- Gam, from *cam*, meaning 'bandy', or possibly 'squinting'.
- Goch, from *coch*, meaning 'red-haired'. Eventually used as a surname: 'Gough', 'Goff' and other forms.
- Hir, unchanged from *hir*, meaning tall.
- Hyna ap Llywelyn ap Hywel. This Dafydd was the 'eldest', *hynaf*, which has lost its final *f*.
- Leiaf, from *lleiaf*, meaning 'youngest'.
- Llwyd (not mutated here), meaning 'grey' or 'light brown'. This became a fixed surname as early as the fourteenth century; widespread today as 'Lloyd' and 'Floyd', less frequently as 'Loyd'.
- Nanmor, a proper noun referring to the birthplace of this Dafydd, near Beddgelert, Gwynedd.
- Sais, meaning generally 'Englishman'. Often curiously applied to obvious Welshmen, where it must mean 'English-speaking' or 'having lived in England'.

### The decline of the patronymic system and the formation of surnames

The steady penetration of Wales by influences from its much larger and more powerful neighbour from the 15th century onwards had two consequences as far as personal names were concerned. First, names within the patronymic system frequently became Anglicized, and many of the older Celtic names fell into disuse. Second, the patronymic system itself was undermined by pressure to conform with the surname system, which had taken root earlier in England.

In passing it may be noted that Welsh names were often 'Latinized' when cited in medieval documents, just as English names were. This process took them further from their original Welsh sound, and if anything, nearer to English. For example, 'Griflinus' was common for 'Gruffydd' and 'Leolinus' for 'Llewelyn'. The same person might be cited in a Welsh, Latin or English form, and one cannot be sure which form, if any, was considered definitive at the time.

One obvious way of calling a halt to the patronymic succession and creating a surname was to adopt the father's name as such. Many surnames of this kind incorporated a vestigial consonant, *b* or *p*, from *ab* or *ap*. Thus 'ab Owen' gave 'Bowen', 'ap Hywel' gave 'Powell' and 'ap Rhys' gave 'Pryse', 'Price' and 'Preece'. But the old habit was tenacious, and the fact that *ap* had already been assimilated in a name presumably used as a surname did not prevent that name being recycled into the patronymic system. Thus we find among the tenants of Popham manor near Barry, Glamorgan, in 1584, a Jenkin ap Poel and a Hoel ap Poel (Moore, 1984: 123).

On the other hand, names without a vestigial consonant

often became surnames: for example, Owen, Howell, Rees and Rice to parallel the forms cited above. In some cases there was a temptation to add a genitive 's' to do duty for the *ap*. These included Evans, Jones and Davies. Occasionally a 'familiar' ('hypocoristic') form of a Welsh name formed the basis of an Anglicized surname, such as 'Gutyn', from Gruffydd, which gave 'Gittins'. Epithets, too, became surnames. Already mentioned is *vychan*, which gave 'Vaughan'. Finally, some surnames were formed from the names of places of origin: for example, Barry, Picton and Mostyn.

In the adoption of surnames the Welsh gentry led the way. As they came into increasing contact with their counterparts in England, they found it unfashionable and inconvenient to be without surnames. The most noteworthy example was Owain ap Maredudd ap Tudur ap Gronw Fychan (c. 1400–1461), who took his grandfather's name 'Tudur' as his fixed surname. He was the grandfather of Henry Tudor, who became King Henry VII. Had Owain chosen to be Owain Maredudd, England would have had a 'Meredith' dynasty, to use the Anglicized form. In sixteenth-century Glamorgan Sir Roger Williams, who was the son of Thomas ap William, took the name of his grandfather, with the genitive 's'. In the following century Sir Lcoline Jenkins took his father's name; he was the son of Jenkin ap Llew' ap Gwilym Gwyn. Colonel Philip Jones of Fonmon was the son of David Johns, son of Philip ap John; here the 'ap John' became 'Johns' and then 'Jones' (Williams, 1961, part 2: 60).

The dominance of the father's name in the patronymic system meant that the surnames that developed out of it were from male names. There were exceptions, for reasons which are not certain. Forms of 'Gweirful' and 'Gwenhwyfar', for instance, can be traced as surnames. Another phenomenon relating to women's names is the incorporation of a surname from the female line into a family name for reasons of inheritance, as in the Williams Wynn family of Wynnstay, where the 'Wynn' is derived from an heiress. Unconnected with this is a modern Welsh custom of including the mother's surname before that of the father in a family name, such as 'Robert Williams Parry'. For a detailed treatment of these and similar topics the reader is referred to T. J. and Prys Morgan, *Welsh surnames* (1985).

## Indexing historic patronymic names

In the original patronymic form the first name is the significant one and becomes the guideword. Since most recorded Welsh patronymics belonged to the Middle Ages, they will tend to occur in works on Welsh history, where the narrative function has received more attention than the classification of names. Attempts to standardize methods of indexing names have been few and unconcerted. There is great variation in practice. Some indexers put a sequence of surnames before a sequence of patronymics, some after. Some make separate sequences for *ab* and *ap*, some amalgamate. Some make a separate sequence for single names followed by epithets, others incorporate them into a combined *ab* and *ap* sequence. Finally, some incorporate all forms in one sequence.

J. G. Edwards in *Littere wallie* (1940) made two sequences of entries under 'Dafydd', separating *ap* forms from names with added epithets:

Dafydd ap William  
Dafydd ab Ybryth  
Dafydd ab Ydean

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Dafydd Fychan  
Dafydd Goch

James Conway Davies in *The Welsh assize roll, 1277–1284* (1940) attempted the same thing (though with a few anomalies), taking Gruffydd ap David through to Gruffydd ap Rewathlan Llwyd, and then beginning a new sequence with Gruffydd Ddu Foel.

J. E. Lloyd in *A history of Carmarthenshire* (1939) had three sequences, for *ab*, *ap* and those with epithets, for example Maredudd ab ———, Maredudd ap ———, Maredudd Ddall (from *dall* = 'blind'). T. I. Jeffreys Jones in *Exchequer proceedings . . .* (1955) made one sequence for Griffeth and variants with *ap*, another for Griffeth and variants without *ap*, and a third for Griffiths (with 's') as a surname.

E. A. Lewis and J. Conway Davies in *Records of the Court of Augmentations . . .* (1954) made three sequences under Lewis: first, Lewis as a surname; second, Lewis as patronymic with *ab* or *ap*; and third, Lewis with added epithets.

A quite different procedure was followed by Ralph A. Griffiths in *The principality of Wales . . .* (1972), who consolidated all patronymics, with or without *ab* or *ap* and including those with epithets, so that the sequence was determined by the initial letter of the second name or the epithet, thus:

Dafydd ap Gwilym ap Llywelyn Llwyd (*ap* before consonants)  
Dafydd ap Gwilym Payn  
Dafydd ap Gwilym ap y Person (*y Person* = 'the Parson')  
Dafydd Gwyn (Gwyn here either adjectival = 'fair or white-headed', or proper name of father, with *ap* missing)  
Dafydd Gwyn ab leuan ap Madog (*ab* before vowel)  
Dafydd Gwyn ab leuan ap Morys (different individual, since grandfather is different from previous)  
Dafydd Hir ap Llywelyn ap Philip (*hir* = 'tall')  
Dafydd Hyna ap Llywelyn ap Hywel (*hynaf* = 'eldest')  
Dafydd Hywel (*ap* lost)  
Dafydd ap Hywel  
Dafydd ap Hywel ap Cadwgan

There were no surnames in the form of Dafydd in this index, but elsewhere in the same work a separate sequence was used for surnames, if needed. This practice was also followed by T. B. Pugh in *The marcher lordships of South Wales* (1963). George T. Clark in *The genealogies of Morgan and Glamorgan* (1886) consolidated not only *ab* and *ap* forms and epithets, but also surnames in the same sequence. The foregoing examples are from indexes in historical publications.

The reader will wonder what efforts have been made to produce systematic indexes of Welsh names which might serve as patterns to follow. Three significant works may be cited. The first is the massive works in manuscript and typescript (facsimile editions) by Peter C. Bartrum, *Welsh genealogies A.D. 300–1400* (1972), and *Welsh genealogies*

A.D. 1400–1500 (1983). For the present purpose Volume XII, *Index of surnames*, and Volumes XIII onwards: *Index of persons*, are the relevant sources. Variants of names are grouped under standardized forms and indexed according to the English alphabet.

A more accessible and much smaller publication is the 25-page *Indexes to schedules: introduction*, published by the Department of Manuscripts and Records of the National Library of Wales (1978). This is simply an introduction to the extensive card index relating to the schedules (not documents) held by the Department. The section pertinent to the present enquiry is the select personal-name index, which is divided into two parts: the Welsh index and the English index. The Welsh index is based on first names: that is, patronymics. For the standard forms modern Welsh spelling is used, and the index follows the modern Welsh alphabet. *Ap* and *ferch* (or their equivalents) do not affect the ordering. Presumed patronymics without *ap* and the like are all included in the one sequence. Thus under the standard form 'RHYS', a sample part of the sequence runs:

(REES HYWEL HARRI  
 (RYS HOWELL PARRY  
 (RES POWEL HARRY  
 (REES POWELL PARRY  
 REES HYWEL HARRI Goch  
 RYS HOWEL Goch PARRY  
 REES HOWEL Llwyd ap HARRI  
 RIS Goch ap HOWELL ap HARRY

The bracketed names are exactly equatable and have to be ordered according to date.

The English index lists persons and families along familiar lines, and deals primarily with surnames, except in the case of persons without surnames, such as monarchs and saints, if they do not appear to be Welsh. This index follows the English alphabet. As with first names in the Welsh index, standard forms are adopted; for instance, 'JONES' includes 'Johnes', 'MORRIS' includes 'Maurice' and 'Morys' and 'REES' includes 'Rhys' and 'Rice'. Hyphenated surnames are normally entered under the second element.

Third *Welsh surnames* by T. J. Morgan and Prys Morgan (Cardiff, 1985), deals not only with surnames, but inevitably with their sources, including the patronymic system. Again, the authors adopt standard forms and group variants within them. For example, 'Gruffudd' covers 'Gruffydd', 'Griffith(s)', 'Guto', 'Gittins', 'Griffyn' and so on.

## The International Genealogical Index

An index of personal names still to be considered is the International Genealogical Index (IGI), published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in microfiche; hence its popular description, 'the Mormon fiche'. It is a worldwide project, containing some 88 million names which date from the early 1500s to c. 1875. It has been created for religious reasons (which need not be elaborated here), but at the same time it can prove a useful tool for genealogical research generally. The information has been gathered from parish registers, wills and so on. A consoli-

dated edition for Wales was published in 1984, divided into two sections: 'Surnames' and 'Given Names'. An update appeared in 1988, classified under the old counties of Wales and Monmouthshire.

The introductory matter of the IGI acknowledges the existence of patronymics before 1900 in Scandinavia, the Netherlands and Wales, and enters a caveat: 'the Genealogical Department uses arbitrary guidelines for assigning patronymic surnames'. A clue to the policy regarding Welsh cases is given by an entry under Caernarvonshire (1988 edn.): 'Ap Robert, see 'Robert'. In short, the second element of a patronymic is taken to be the guideword. The information is there, but has to be found by inspecting the recorded name of the child and comparing it with the name of the father, as in the example 'Ellis, Ann [daughter of] Ellis Williams and Margaret' (dated 20 October 1805).

It does not follow that *ap* or *verch* was still in use when these 'hidden' patronymics were recorded in the parish registers, but hidden or explicit, many patronymics should be traceable in the 'Given Name' index. The compilers clearly knew something about the formation of Welsh surnames, since they index 'Bellis' under 'Ellis', 'Bowen' under 'Owen' and 'Powell' under 'Howell'. However, 'Beynon' appears under 'B', not under 'E' for 'Eynon'. The introductory rubrics include the useful advice: 'This means you must be alert.'

## Modern patronymics

In the 19th century there was a revival of patronymics not as a self-sufficient naming system, but as additional names or 'ornamental aliases'. This was largely inspired by patriotic and antiquarian feeling, but it had a practical value in helping to distinguish between numerous individuals bearing the same humdrum name.

*The dictionary of Welsh biography* (Lloyd and Jenkins, 1959) records no fewer than 17 individuals named William Williams whose lives fell wholly or partly into the 19th century, and most of these fortunately bore a recognized bardic name or other epithet.<sup>3</sup>

For their 'secondary' name some chose a form exactly following the old patronymic. Taliesin Williams (1787–1847) took the name 'Taliesin ab Iolo' after his more famous father, 'Iolo Morganwg', otherwise Edward Williams, stonemason, antiquarian, poet and founder of the Gorsedd of the Bards of the Isle of Britain, now an inseparable feature of the National Eisteddfod of Wales.

'Iolo' is a familiar or 'hypocoristic' form of 'Iorwerth', which is a Welsh equivalent for Edward. The Reverend John Williams (1811–1862), high church man, eisteddfod promoter, transcriber of manuscripts and joint founder of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, achieved fame under the pseudonym 'Ab Ithel', which he adapted from his grandfather's surname 'Bethell'. This was a patronymic without a main identity. The same kind of half-patronymic was adopted by William Williams the artist (1837–1915) – not to be confused with the hymn-writer of the same name – who became known as 'Ap Caledfryn', an expression derived from the bardic name 'Caledfryn' which distinguished his father, also William Williams (1801–1869), who

was a nonconformist minister. A capital 'A' was used in each of the above cases because the expression stood alone.

As distinct from 'ornamental aliases' invented for bardic and eisteddfodic purposes, a new category of patronymics has emerged in the twentieth century, names devised by nostalgic language enthusiasts seeking to establish a modern identity for themselves in the old style. In the 1930s a well-known Welsh headmaster, Evan Thomas Griffiths, used to address letters to his son, a student at Aberystwyth, in the form *Islwyn ab Ifan* ('Ifan' = 'Evan'). The son did not retain this style in later life, but found it of some advantage in college to distinguish himself from another student of the same name but of different parentage.<sup>4</sup>

## Indexing modern patronymics

In the modern world the making of indexes is not confined to the last few pages of a printed book, it is part of the machinery of daily life. In a hospital, a doctor's surgery, a bank, an office or any context where personal service is dispensed on a large scale, the retrieval of names is crucial to the effectiveness of the service. In a society which assumes the existence of definitive surnames transmitted from one generation to another (which still applies when a woman changes her name by marriage), the idea that a full identity resides in one personal name is incomprehensible; this is assumed to be a 'first' name and therefore not capable of becoming a guideword. When the patronymic principle is explained, it becomes obvious that the second name, the father's, is quite inappropriate as a guideword, so that leaves only *ab* or *ap*. This last is the solution chosen by the telephone directory, where separate sequences are adopted for *ab*, *ap* and agglutinated forms. In the volume for North West Wales dated July 1987, the patronymic entries were arranged as follows under 'A' (punctuation of British Telecom):

Ab Eurig Arfon Wyn (Arfon Wyn being two first names)  
Ab Ifor G. (G being the initial of a first name)  
Ab Iorwerth R.

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Ap Cynan M.  
Ap Gomer Elfed  
Ap Griffith Dafydd  
ap Gwilym E.  
Ap Iorwerth H. M.  
Ap Rhobert D. Ll.  
Ap Thomas E.  
Ap Thomas G.  
Ap Thomas Dr I.  
Ap Thomas Partnership  
Ap Tomas

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Aprhys Dr T. Ll. (presumably the subscriber's chosen form)  
Ap-Thomas D. R. (in Telecom rules the hyphen evidently joins rather than separates for the purpose of indexing)  
Ap-Thomas I.

This practice is followed in *The phone book* for other parts of Wales. As would be expected from the geographical

distribution of Welsh users, the north-west has produced more entries of this kind than elsewhere. In the south-west one subscriber has seen risks in the situation: the firm 'Ap Gwent & Co.' has one entry under 'A' and another under 'G' as 'Gwent Ap & Co.'. This expression shows the patronymic tradition in terminal decline: first, it refers to a corporate institution, not an individual, and second, the indispensable first name is not mentioned.

When the sons of the present generation of patronymic subscribers wish to be entered in the telephone directory, they will have to decide whether to substitute the father's name for that of the grandfather (and thus probably move the entry in a different place in the *Ap* sequence), or to allow the grandfather's name to become a quasi-surname preceded by *Ap*, hyphenated to *Ap* or amalgamated with *Ap*. This was essentially the dilemma of the Welsh in the late Middle Ages, when patronymics first became surnames. Of course, if a craze for patronymics swept the Welsh nation, and half the telephone directory came to be filled with *Ab* and *Ap* entries, the compilers might be induced to adopt a true patronymic sequence with the subscriber's first name as guideword. Unfortunately, the prevalent use of initials rather than first names would seriously hamper such a move. A choice would next have to be made on whether to include patronymics within the main sequence or deal with them separately.

## Other Welsh personal names affected by mutation

Many biblical and non-Welsh historical personages have been given Welsh names, and under the appropriate conditions mutation may take place, as in the names of Welsh people. Indexers familiar with Welsh will not find this a problem, but others might like to be forewarned in case such expressions are quoted in an English text. In English 'William the Conqueror' would be indexed under 'W' with a possible finding-reference 'Conqueror' under 'C'. The Welsh equivalent is 'Gwilym Orchfygwr'; the second element has mutated from its radical form *gorchfygwr* (= 'conqueror') because it is in apposition to 'Gwilym' and if given as a finding-reference it should be in the radical form under 'G'. Similarly, 'John the Baptist' is 'Ioan Fedyddiwr' in Welsh; the radical form of *fedyddiwr* (= 'baptist') is *bedyddiwr*, to be indexed under 'B'. However, in the case of 'Dewi Sant' (= 'Saint David'), the 'S' does not mutate (see table of mutations already given). 'Dewi' is an earlier Welsh form of 'David' than 'Dafydd' and is always used for the patron saint. In Welsh, 'Dewi Sant' is indexed under 'D', while in English 'St David' will sometimes be under 'S' and sometimes under 'D' according to the nature of the work indexed.

Mutated names will obviously create difficulty in computer word-searches.

## Welsh ornamental aliases

The Welsh have never been backward in inventing extra names for themselves and their compatriots. Some of these names arose from a spirit of humour or satire, some were

designed to make the holder feel grander than his normal name would suggest, and some were needed to distinguish between a host of individuals bearing the same name. These were not the names entered in the parish register at the time of birth and death, not the names that gave an individual a legal and fiscal identity.

The Welsh edition of the dictionary of Welsh biography, *Y Bywgraffiadur Cymreig hyd 1940* (1953), contains a list by M. Beatrice Davies of nearly 500 pseudonyms referring to prominent Welsh people included in the dictionary who had lived at any date up to 1940.<sup>5</sup> Apart from a handful of medieval origin, the vast majority originated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the preponderance in the latter. This is hardly surprising, for the population was then increasing greatly and Welsh cultural awareness and national consciousness were reaching a climax. At that time, too, real names in Wales demonstrated the ultimate in dullness and repetition, with David Davieses and John Joneses by the thousand. Most of those who received or gave themselves such additional names were intellectuals of one kind or another – writers, poets, painters, ministers of religion, musicians and so on.

What were the sources of inspiration for these pseudonyms? The old patronymic style has already been mentioned, and various other examples have appeared in the text. Some celebrities took names from Welsh history, such as ‘Caradog’, ‘Giraldus’ and ‘Gwrgant’, others from classical tradition, such as ‘Brutus’, ‘Nicander’ and ‘Vulcan’. The teacher and bard David Richards (1751–1827) was called ‘Dafydd Ionawr’ because his birthday was in January (Ionawr). John Ceiriog Hughes (1832–1887) used his middle name ‘Ceiriog’, which referred to a river near his birthplace. In the twentieth century the Reverend Albert Evans Jones is much more recognizable in Wales under his bardic name ‘Cynan’, and the Reverend William Evans as ‘Wil Ifan’. Both served as archdruids of the Gorsedd. Such names may well be the principal form used in a publication, and thus require indexing as guidewords carrying the main entry. This occurs in W. J. Gruffydd’s anthology of Welsh poetry, *Y Flodeugerdd Gymraeg* (1946). Bardic pseudonyms are not just a phenomenon of history; they are created in significant numbers annually as new members are admitted to the Gorsedd of the Bards of the Isle of Britain by examination or *honoris causa* at the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales. Not only poets and writers but public figures of distinction are honoured.

## Conclusions

Amidst all the complexities of Welsh names, what simple rules can be offered in summary to the indexer? While certain basic principles can be commended after examining many divergent practices, it has to be admitted that in this field, perhaps more than in others, one has to take a relativist position. Much depends on the purpose of the index itself, if it stands alone, or of the publication which it is to serve. Quite opposite conclusions may be reached in different cases.

A true patronymic, whatever its length, should undoubtedly be indexed under its first element; any other solution

destroys its identity. Thus ‘Llywelyn ap Gruffydd’ will appear under ‘L’ in an English work and under ‘Ll’ in a Welsh; similarly, ‘Gwenllian ferch Madoc’ will appear under ‘G’ in either language. In the case of an incomplete patronymic, that is, one without the first element, as ‘Ab Ithcl’, there is no alternative but to index it under ‘A’ (examples beginning *Ferch* do not occur); since such forms are invariably alternative names of recent creation, they can be cross-referred to a conventional surname. So, too, when *Ap* has become an integral part of the second name to form a quasi-surname, such as ‘Aprhys’, the name appears under ‘A’. Difficulty arises when some modern administrative decision places all names containing *ap* under ‘A’ regardless. Such a situation can only be discovered from experience. Another difficulty is in recognizing a patronymic at all in a possible example where no connecting *ap* or *verch* is present. It is not practicable to offer rules on how to recognize a ‘hidden’ patronymic; only experience, knowledge and a scrutiny of the context can provide the answer, and even then not every time.

The real problem with patronymics is to decide how many sequences there should be. Strict adherence to general indexing conventions would indicate five:

- names with *ab*
- names with *ap*
- names with *ab* or *ap* understood but not expressed
- names followed by an epithet before *ab*
- names followed by an epithet before *ap*.

However, since *ab* and *ap* are identical in meaning and function and their omission is merely an accident of history, common sense and ease of retrieval would impel one to make a single sequence, provided the purpose of the publication was not specifically to demonstrate the relative frequency of *ab*, *ap* and so on.

It can be argued that surnames are a different kind of name and deserve a separate sequence from patronymics. This is the point of view of P. C. Bartrum and the National Library of Wales in their large-scale classificatory systems. On the other hand, in a relatively short index to his *Genealogies* (1886), G. T. Clark opted for one sequence for patronymics and surnames. Next is the matter of mutations. These will normally be expected in epithets following a Christian name (though not in all initial letters). Exceptionally, an obvious mutation is found in a Christian name, and it can also occur in the historical development of surnames. The normal aim should be to retrieve the radical form for the main entry, and, if the variant is considered to be sufficiently important, to give a cross-reference, such as ‘Wenllian, *see* Gwenllian’.

In any classification of Christian names or surnames, some grouping of cognate forms may be necessary, with a standard version as guideword. The three indexes, Bartrum (1972, 1983), National Library of Wales (1978) and Morgan and Morgan (1985), can offer useful precedents, though they will not be unanimous in every particular.

Finally, the question of pseudonyms will loom large in works of Welsh interest relating to literature, history, religion and certain cultural activities. Usual indexing practice places the main entry under the real name and gives a cross-reference

under the pseudonym, but again the nature of the publication or classification involved will have to be taken into account. In many works on Welsh literature, whether in Welsh or English, pseudonyms (bardic names) are used as main references in the text; in such cases the index must reflect the text and use the pseudonyms as guidewords, with cross-references, if thought appropriate, under the real names. Happily, one is not likely to be troubled by variants or by mutations in this category (Stephens, 1986).

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### First publication

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### This publication

This version has been reprinted from *The Indexer* 17(1) (April 1990), pp. 12–20. It has been edited to conform to modern *Indexer* style, and some of the bibliography entries have been expanded and brought up to date.

## Notes

- 1 See for instance the index to Alexander and Binski (1987).
- 2 Information from Dr Prys Morgan.
- 3 This work was published in two editions: the main volume (Lloyd and Jenkins, 1953) and supplement (Jones and Roberts, 1970), and the English edition (in effect a revised edition of the Welsh) (Lloyd and Jenkins, 1959).
- 4 Personal knowledge.
- 5 Unfortunately the list of pseudonyms does not appear in the English edition; the information is absorbed in the text as cross-references.

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