

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

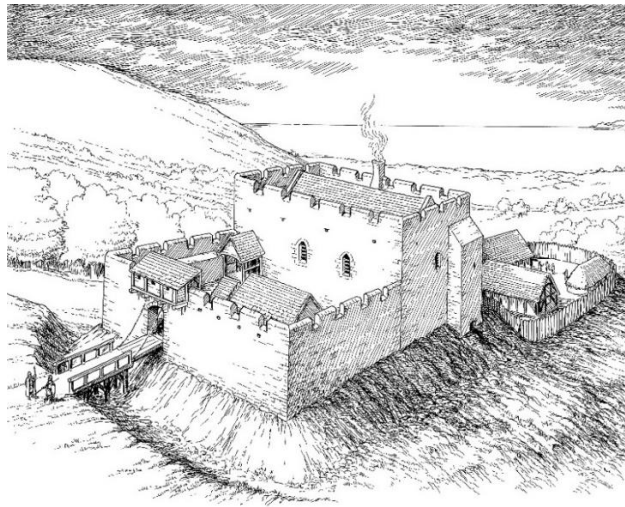
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Llywodraeth y DU



COFIO CYMRY EIN CYNEFIN



by Margaret Jones & Eirwen Hopkins

CALON AFAN

Cwmni Buddiant Cymunedol **Calon Afan** Community Interest Company
2 Brookway Close, Port Talbot, SA12 8EL Rhif y Cwmni/Company number: **15284549**
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FOREWORD

When working on a topic area, sometimes the teaching through and with the Welsh language needs a few extra ideas or resources. Here, to support your work with children on the exciting stories of medieval Port Talbot and Afan, we are offering some approaches that might inspire curiosity and pride in our area's unique history.

Also, to assist with both literacy and oracy, in Section 3 we offer these resources:

1. Video: Viewpoints – presenting different perspectives on what happened on Mynydd Dinas in medieval times, from the past and the present.
2. Ceffyl y Fari Lwyd: story by Menna Moras in Welsh
3. 'The Cwmafan Mari Lwyd' by Tim Rees (translation to Welsh)
4. Video recordings of Ceffyl y Fari Lwyd and the Cwmafan Mari Lwyd by Owen Staton, Storyteller
5. Medieval painting by Matthew Paris showing the Norman soldier and the Welshman.
6. Illustrated articles on medieval daily life in Wales: See Section 2 Historic Material.
7. Folk songs and nursery rhymes with relevance to horses, medieval life etc.
8. Local placenames – their meanings
9. The Cwmafan Mari Lwyd and pwnco



Pob hwyl!

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Story of Herbert FitzMatthew

This is a story originating in the twelfth century in Baglan and Cwmafan, featuring Mynydd Dinas.

See Section 3:

- Ceffyl y Fari Lwyd: story by Menna Moras: it is offered as a text, and also as a video recording by Owen Staton telling the tale, the storyteller.
- The story is also told in the words of Tim Rees in 'The Cwmafan Mari Lwyd'
- The pupils could be shown the medieval picture by Matthew Paris



The death of Herbert FitzMatthew

Matthaei Paris Chronica Maiora II Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

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Literacy/Comprehension

After watching the video or hearing the tale read, the story could be explored for meaning in which ever language is deemed suitable on their understanding of the story. These questions could be at which ever linguistic level the teacher feels appropriate.

Establish basic understanding: e.g.

Pwy sy'n taflu'r garreg? Who is throwing the stone?

Pwy daflodd y garreg? Who threw the stone?

The pupils could be shown the drawing by the medieval monk, Matthew Paris, of the Norman soldier and the local peasant.

Using the picture and the story, the feelings of the knight and the peasant, and the farmer (and the horse?)

Pam rych ch'n feddwl iddo daflu'r garreg? Why do you think he threw the stone?

Before or after telling the tales, it might be fun to explore the meaning and derivations of some words e.g.

Marchog – comes from the word march – what do they both mean and why might this be?



A 14th-century depiction of the 13th-century German knight Hartmann von Aue,
By Master of the Codex Manesse - <http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpg848/0364>, Public Domain,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=190394>

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Daily life in medieval times: Section 2

Section 2 has illustrated bite-size articles on medieval life in Welsh. These show general conditions of life of the period. Of particular Welsh interest:

- The Laws of Hywel Dda
- Medicine in South Wales,
- The Dyn Hysbys
- The Princes of Afan
- Gerald of Wales
- Ieuan Gethin

Further especial Welsh relevance could come from some old songs, of which there are good recordings by modern groups:

Traditional Welsh songs: see **Resource 7** and references to recordings by Welsh groups Plethyn, Vri etc. for some lovely, and easily accessed, songs which offer insights into life in olden times e.g.

‘Can y Catheiriwr’ an ox-driving song with a call to the oxen at the end of each verse, the singer refers to oxen to draw a plough, (they are better than pigs!) what people ate e.g. barley bread as hard as tree-bark, and wise sayings that get you through life.

In ‘Ar y bryn mae caseg felen’ the singer wishes he could be free to run with the horse, fly with the seagull etc., but realises that he has to shut up, stop dreaming, and stay with the plough.

Many songs celebrate the importance of the horse in olden times: e.g. The Welsh folk song called ‘Gen i Farch Glas’ describes how proud the rider feels as he ‘lords’ it over others.

‘Cân y Cathreiniwr’ from CD ‘Blas y Pridd’, Plethyn, 1979

‘Mae Gen i Farch Glas’ and ‘Ar y Bryn mae Gaseg Felen’ from CD Vri, ‘Islais a Genir’ 2023

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Place names on and around Mynydd Dinas_(Resource 8)

We offer a pamphlet on local place names (**Section 3**), which can be a good way into learning vocabulary, but also leads to other themes: why might places be named as they are?

We have the names of the various farms, fields. What do they mean? Not always easy to figure them out. Is there a reliable resource we could use? Are old maps of any use?

e.g. May the field names: Gadlish Fach and Gadlish Isaf be version of 'Gad = battle and Llys = court? If this is true, what may have happened on that land?

May Maes Llewelyn have anything to do with Prince Llewelyn Fawr of Gwynedd? If so, how might this be?



1841 Tithe Map of Baglan showing Tynytwr, Tŷ Newydd, Gadlish fach & Gadlish Isaf
West Glamorgan Archives

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The Welsh language in place names that children know: Cwm Clais, Plas Baglan, could be discussed followed by the names of the streets, houses, villages where the children live: The meanings of *Cwm, Pont, Heol, Nant, Baglan, Mynydd Dinas*....

Pupils could be encouraged to use refer to **Resource 7** or even a dictionary.

Follow-up

Following on from the story, there are many themes to pursue in any number of ways. Generally see Battles, Bards and Wild Neighbours; but for students studying Welsh:

War, peace and diplomacy

The comparison of the story of Herbert FitzMatthew and the Welsh stone-thrower with the Biblical tale of David and Goliath – the story could be read from the Children’s bible: *Y Beibl i Blant*: adaptation of M Batchelor, Gwasg Bryntirion 1991 pp 138-141.

Discussion could include weaponry etc. Was David really the underdog – or did he have the latest technology in weapons, the newly-invented sling-shot?

The three stories about marriage in olden times (**See Section 3**)

Welsh and Other Languages

What languages do we think might have been spoken in medieval Wales?

What do some language have in common e.g. the similarities between Welsh and French words for bridge, church, school, horse etc.

Welsh, Latin, Norman French? Who spoke – and wrote in - these different languages? What purposes did they have?

The class differences in using language: e.g. cow and beef, sheep and mutton.

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Is it likely that any English was spoken in Wales at that time? What might be the reasons for this? Do we know the answer to this? Do we know everything about olden times?

The peasant, the farmers would probably have been monoglot Welsh speakers. The lords of Afan, educated more widely, would also have spoken Welsh, and also Norman French and probably some Latin. Latin was the language of worship and legal affairs. The Normans would speak their own language Norman French, and some Latin. May they have spoken any Welsh?

This leads to questions of multilingualism and multi-lingual societies:

Who speaks more than one language today? Is it unusual or common throughout the world?

How many different languages are there in the classroom? In the school? (Graphs?)



The Aberafan Charter of 1306. It was written in Latin (See Section 2)
West Glamorgan Archives

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General themes: The question of sources of information:

Who wrote the history of the Norman invasion of Wales? General themes: what can be trusted, and when should you examine the author of the information, what their motive or agenda might be for writing it; relevance to the use of the internet today.

e.g. Why is the Welshman in the monk's picture wearing rags, while the Norman has full armour, plumes etc.? Might this have been a true depiction of them, or someone's idea?

Who was Matthew Paris? (**See Section 2**) Would he have written the Welsh or the Norman version of the story?

Who was Gerald of Wales? (**See Section 2**) Do you think he considered himself Welsh, or English? Can we think of ourselves as more than one nationality?



Gerald de Barri's uncle, Maurice FitzGerald, Lord of Llanstephan, M/S the *Expugnatio Hibernica*
By Unknown artist of the 12th century - National Library of Ireland, MS 700, f77
Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=43957977>

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Mari Lwyd

Our 'Cwmafan Mari Lwyd (**Section 3**) tells of the local Mari Lwyd (available in Welsh and English). Read and interpret some of the verses, explain the convention of 'pwnco' which, in its competitive improvisational quality, has similarities to rap 'face-off'.

Old videos and films available on the web:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_xFo6Hifzk

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLW9NGAnYCQlvFvdFfekStCdGTGAorii32>

This could be followed again by discussions at different levels.

The Welsh in these verses can be difficult, particularly so for learners, but as there are some local expressions as well, they could be difficult for Welsh speaker and for teachers who were not raised here.

Considering that these verses were not 'written in stone', and made up on the spot, it would be great to get the children to create their own verses.

Pob lwc!



Cwmafan Mari Lwyd at the Gower Wassail event in 2018
Photograph: Tim Rees

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We hope this approach works well for the children and for you. We would love to hear of any work that happens.

Please do contact us on: contact@calonafan.org

CALON AFAN is a community interest company based in Port Talbot whose mission is to research and share the lesser-known histories of Port Talbot and the Afan Valley.

We're working to put Port Talbot and the Afan Valley on the map for its unique heritage and history.

Image on front cover: Artist's reconstruction of how Plas Baglan may have looked, seen from the north:
Paul R Davis (from *Towers of Defiance Y Lolfa* 2021).

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