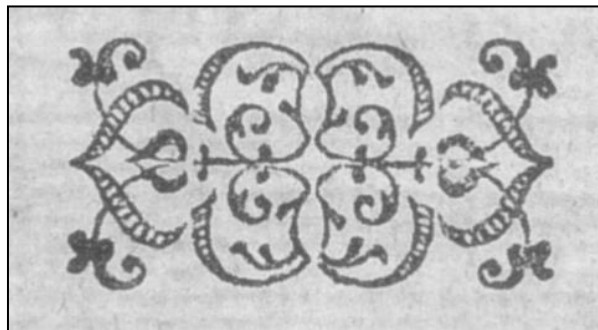


The Landmark Trust

DOLBELYDR

History Album

VOLUME II



Written and researched

**by
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July 2003**

Last updated April 2004

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FUNDING

The Landmark Trust gratefully acknowledges help from the following:

Heritage Lottery Fund	Esmeé Fairbairn Foundation
CADW	Trusthouse Charitable Trust
Welsh Development Agency	The Veneziana Fund
Denbighshire County Council	Trees Naunton Charitable Trust
Denbighshire Key Fund	Carpenter Charitable Trust
Welsh Tourist Board	Inverforth Charitable Trust

- and the many private individuals who supported Dolbelydr through The Landmark Appeal.

LEGACIES

A bequest from Dorothy Stroud enabled us to purchase Dolbelydr and funded part of the restoration.

The restoration was also helped by legacies from Diana Wray Bliss, William Williams and Ronald Quinn, and by a gift from Mrs J Harris *in memoriam* Mrs E E Ashby

Landmark would like to express its gratitude for these significant and generous contributions.

BOOKS

The books at Dolbelydr have been provided through the generosity of Roger Eaton

DOLBELYDR - Basic Details

Listed: Grade II*

Date: c1580

Acquired by the Landmark Trust: 1999

Opened as a Landmark: Summer 2003

Architect: Andrew Thomas, AA Dipl. RIBA

Main Contractors: Frank Galliers & Sons

Site agent: Eddie Longland

Site carpenters: George Clark & Elwyn

Timber frame reconstruction: Carpenter Oak & Woodland

CO&W carpenters: Steve Wright, Steve Lawrence

Building analysis: Peter Welford

Archaeologist: Pat Frost

Plasterers: Neil Day & Julie Haddow

Ironwork: John Hoare-Ward

Window glass: Hinton Glass

Stone tiling: R G Hinds, Shrewsbury

Painting: J S Hall & Company, Telford

Electrical contractor: Deeside Electrical

Mechanical services: JRS Mechanical Services

Bore hole: Powys Drilling Services

VOLUME I - THE BUILDING

	<u>Page no.</u>
Summary	6
Description & history of the building	9
Restoration	39

List of illustrations

Fig 1	1877 Ordnance Survey	8
Fig 2	1899 OS map	8
Fig 3	Summary of geophysical assessment	10
Fig 4	Wooden Diamond – Mullioned Windows, Fox & Raglan	13
Fig 5	Measured sketches of features (W Bezant Lowe)	14
Fig 6	Geography of sub-mediaeval house types in Wales	16
Fig 7	Axonometric view of an end-chimney, cross passage house	17
Fig 8	Reconstruction of original ground floor plan at Dolbelydr	18
Fig 9	P Welford's reconstruction of Dolbelydr	19
Fig 10	Dolbelydr c 1905	21
Fig 11	Henry Tate's railway carriage	22
	1977 Survey plans	23
	Dolbelydr Before Restoration, (NMRW)	30
	Work in progress photos interleaved	

VOLUME II – HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Summary	5
Henry Salesbury	7
The Welsh language in the 16 th century	10
Henry Salesbury's <i>Grammatica Britannica</i>	15
The Salusburies of Denbighshire	20

List of illustrations

Fig 1	Frontispiece to the Grammatica	16
Fig 2	Salisbury/ Salesbury (Brief Family Tree)	20
Fig 3	Katheryn of Berain "Mam Cymru", Adriaen van Cronenburgh	25
Fig 4	John Salusbury, St Marcella's Church, Denbigh	25
Fig 5	Visit by the Prince of Wales	33
Fig 6	Visit by the Prince of Wales	34
Fig 7	HRH with Peter Pearce and David Alexander	34

Dolbelydr: Summary

Dolbelydr is to be treasured on two main counts. It is a fine example of a 16th century, stone-built manor house, which has survived remarkably unaltered. It was also where Henry Salesbury (1561- c1605), physician and humanist scholar, wrote his *Grammatica Britannica*, published in 1593. The *Grammatica* was one of the first attempts to impose formal grammar on the Welsh language. Little is known of Henry Salesbury's life, although it seems likely that he was related to the Salusbury family, one of the most powerful and wealthy in sixteenth-century Denbighshire.

Originally, Dolbelydr would have been a house of considerable status, built of well-dressed limestone and with tall chimneys. Analysis of the timbers date its construction to c.1578 and for this date its plan is transitional. The end chimneys and primary spiral staircase would have been considered innovatory, as would the rectangular entrance hall with its plank and muntin screen (rather than the more usual cross passage arrangement). Dolbelydr gradually declined in status through the years and underwent various alterations. It stood empty from around 1912.

Landmark first visited Dolbelydr in 1982. Its significance as one of Wales' 'lost houses' had long been recognised but the main obstacle to acquiring it was lack of access – during the latter part of its history the house was often approached on stilts from the opposite side of the River Elwy! We were grateful to Mr. Roberts, the farmer on whose land it stands, to agreeing finally to sell us the building and an access track to it in 1999. This acquisition was directly enabled by a generous bequest by Dorothy Stroud. By the time we acquired the house, the roof had fallen in. A later bread oven and external staircase were reduced to rubble and the solar screen on the first floor had been removed to a house in Chester, where it remains today. We installed emergency scaffolding at once, although it was another two years before we had raised the necessary money for its restoration.

Our initial view was that this was a very interesting vernacular building, special because of its largely unaltered features. Local building historian Peter Welford soon convinced us that this had also once been a house of considerable status for the area, with its tall chimneys and well-dressed stone. This led to considerable soul searching about how we should restore it: its later fabric was if anything more dilapidated than earlier, hard wood remnants. In the end, we decided with our architect Andrew Thomas that as both Dolbelydr's architectural and historic significance stemmed from its late sixteenth-century form, we should present it as closely as possible to its primary appearance.

The house would once have stood in a cluster of walls and farm outbuildings. The forecourt walls have been reconstructed on the footings of the originals and are typical feature of buildings in Denbighshire at this time. As was customary in the 16th century, the walls have again been flush-pointed and then limewashed. Most of the wall at eaves height also had to be rebuilt. Much of the first floor framing remained on the site as well as some of that on the second floor so replacement of the floor joists was not too difficult. The collapsed roof structure was a bigger job, subcontracted to specialists Carpenter Oak and Woodland who took away the roof timbers to their framing yard in Perthshire. Here they painstakingly reassembled the roof frame. Late in the autumn of 2002, a forty foot crane arrived on site to lift the three massive roof trusses back into position. Stone tiles were used for the roof covering, as they would originally have been. There were vestiges of a rear dormer window, which we have recreated and the building now has a full set of correctly sized windows in their original positions, several having twelve or even fourteen mullioned lights made of wood, survivals of great rarity. These too are limewashed once more, in imitation of stone.

Inside, Dolbelydr is a fairly typical lateral entry, cross passage house although the large lobby area to the left of the front door is unusual. A great deal of thought went into how to convert the inside of the building for use as a Landmark, while respecting as much of its primary floor plan and purpose as possible. We became confident that we could accurately reposition the screen to the hall with its Tudor-arched doors, which led us to seek permission to get rid of later partitions. The original newel post for the spiral

staircase was returned by a public-spirited member of the public one open day. In truth, the tightness of these stairs makes them impractical for anything other than the time-traveller in us all and so we have also made a new oak staircase in the latest position for which there was evidence. Apart from this second staircase, the original ground floor floorplan has been largely retrieved. The shower room stands in what was once the service bay and the ground floor bedroom in what would originally have been a parlour.

Although the hall would have become a less communal space by the late sixteenth century, it would still have been used for cooking and we therefore decided to create the freestanding 'island kitchen' in the body of the hall. The slate floor was largely original although many flags had to be replaced. Unobtrusive underfloor heating has been installed. We found the bressumer lying in the middle of the floor – presumably someone had tried to plunder it but then found it simply too heavy to remove. All the bressumers above the hearths would probably have been plastered over originally; to avoid losing the fine moulded stops, we decided instead to limewash them. The cupboard to the left of the hearth was re-made with a fretted ventilation panel, using a photo from the 1970s and fragments found in the room (these probably date from the nineteenth century). The shaft to the right of this hearth was formerly a *garderobe*, accessed from the solar. We found a single diamond-shaped quarry amid the debris of the house, which, like much early glass, was a surprisingly dark green. Today's glass retains a greenish tinge and was made in France. The slate floor on the ground floor may be primary, although many of its flags had to be replaced. The sharp-eyed will find two early nineteenth century characters roughly scratched on the hall-side face of the screen by the doorway – one a soldier with a cockade in his hat, the other perhaps his lady.

The internal partitions in the building were all found to be wattle and daub rather than the more usual lime plaster and this is what has been used for the partitions. Patches of the earliest lime plaster coat on the walls survive in various places through the building, which we have tried to replicate. The division of the first and second floors largely follows the line of original partitions, retraced from evidence in the framing, and new oak floors have been laid. The timbers have almost all been limewashed in. Originally, the solar and perhaps the main bedroom would have been brightly decorated with wall paintings in imitation of wall hangings. The timbers would have been crisp and new. By contrast, the surface of most of the timbers we salvaged was today rough and decayed and so it was decided to paint them in

The first floor solar (today's Landmark sitting room), then and now, is by far the finest room in the house, given extra elegance by being open to the roof with its arch-braced truss. Today's visitors can emerge from the spiral stairs just as Henry Salesbury would have done and gaze like him through green tinged diamond quarry panes down this quiet valley from Dolbelydr, or Meadow of the Rays of the Sun. Just like the house, little has changed here in almost five hundred years.

Henry Salesbury 1561- c 1605

As explained earlier, the Salusbury family in Denbighshire is extensive and over the centuries, just about every conceivable spelling has been used. Henry Salesbury chose to spell his name with an 'e' on the frontispiece of his *Grammatica Britannica* which he wrote at Dolbelydr and so that is the spelling Landmark has stuck to for him.

However, a single letter could express a whole subtext of family loyalties. The NMR (Wales) notes that the branch of the Salusburies holding estates around Ruthin adopted the spelling 'Salesbury' and, throughout the 16th and 17th centuries at least, rarely used any other. And according to the *Salisbury Chronicle*, 'At the end of the 15th century when the Bachymbyd-Rug branches were being founded, their form of the family name most in use was 'Salesbury' ... while the main Lleweni line continued to use 'Salusbury.' Given the factionalism of the 1590s in Denbighshire, might we be able to deduce something of Henry Salesbury's family loyalties from his use of the 'e', and that he was ranging himself not with the glamorous Sir John Salusbury of Lleweni who owned estates around Galltfaenan and Henllan and was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth I's, but rather with his cousins the Salesburys of Bachymbyd?

Yet Henry dedicated his *Grammatica* to the 2nd Earl of Pembroke who was also at the heart of the Elizabethan court and a friend of Sir John Salusbury (see below), so perhaps we are looking for a semantic logic that did not exist in sixteenth-century Denbigh.

According to the Dictionary of Welsh Biography, Henry Salesbury was born in the parish of Henllan in 1561. He closes the foreword to his *Grammatica* by saying farewell 'Ex aedibus paternis Dolbelidrae,' which could mean either 'from the house of my father' or, in late Latin, 'from the house of my forefathers.' It may be that he did not live at Dolbelydr permanently as an adult. Some accounts say that he practised medicine in Denbigh. He married Margery, daughter of Piers Salesbury of Llanrhaidr, and until recently (including the DNB entry) he was believed to have been the Henry Salesbury who died in Chester in 1637.

However, our building archaeologist Peter Welford recently unearthed a deed at 'new' Dolbelydr which makes it clear that Henry Salesbury of Dolbelydr was dead by 1605. Dated 29th May 1605, this deed relates to a sale of lands in Henllan by

Sir Thomas Myddelton (of Chirk castle and Gwaenanog) to John Panton of Westminster for the sum of £850. Panton was the Lord Keeper's secretary and the builder in 1608 of Foxhall Newydd (the extraordinary ruins of which remain in Henllan parish). The deed seems to refer to the land upon which Foxhall Newydd was built, although the 1608 house was grafted on to the ruins of an earlier end chimney house much like Dolbelydr.

The deed implies that this earlier building was, by this stage, Henry Salesbury's house and estate, and also that he was dead by 1605. The relevant section reads:

‘ All that capital meassuage w'th thappurtenance late in the tenure and occupacon of Henrye Salesburye of Henllan deceased....sett lyenge and beinge in Henllan Alltvaynan and Llew enye aforesayde in the sayde countie of Denbighe'.

Found with the deed was a letter from W.M. Middelton to Col. Charles Salusbury Mainwaring dated 8th March 1915. In it Myddelton discusses the deed, which he had been sent by Colonel Mainwaring for comment. He mentions Sir Thomas Myddelton's accounts (at that time still in his possession) which include references to the ‘ landes of Henrie Salusburies being in the p'she of Henllan in Denbihshire' (29 April 1592). There is also mention of ‘ Henrie Salusburye of Alltvaynan' in a letter of 20 Sept, 43 Eliz (1600). Myddelton seems certain that the Henry Salesbury referred to in these letters is ‘ your H.S. of Dolbelidr' and concludes that he must therefore have died between 20th September 1600 and 29th May 1605. Myddleton continues: ‘ it is a wonder Robert Parry does not record his death, but of course he may have died away from Denbigh'.

Reading the fractious and litigious documents that survive from late Elizabethan Denbighshire, we can almost take some satisfaction from the fact that Henry Salesbury does not seem to have played any active part in local and national affairs. There are so many Sale/u/i/sbu/erys in the records of the area and, despite the preferences of particular family branches for particular spellings, the spelling of contemporary clerks and recordkeepers was so erratic that it is well nigh impossible to tease out the correct branch. Even though the Salesbury spelling and Henry are relatively rare names in the records of Denbigh, leads on the activity of either Henry or his father are virtually non-existent. Of Henry's father, Thomas, the probable builder of Dolbelydr, we know virtually nothing. For the

jigsaw of Henry Salesbury's life we have, really, only three pieces: his birth in 1561, the publication of his *Grammatica* in 1593 and his death by 1605. To these we can add only a sprinkling of references to other fragments published in other men's volumes and believed to have been written by him. Anthony a Wood, our most detailed source, cites no concrete sources and we believe him mostly for his chronological proximity to Salesbury's life.

Wood (1632-95) was an English antiquary who compiled, among other things, biographical notes upon noted Oxford graduates. These he first published as *Athenae Oxoniensis* in 1691-2. According to Wood, Henry Salesbury received his B.A. in 1584 at St Alban's Hall. St Alban's existed by 1313 but became the property of Merton College in 1549 and was fully incorporated into Merton in 1882. A further note is recorded 'by Humphreys or some other', that Henry Salesbury was

'born of, and descended from, a right ancient family of his name living in Denbighshire, became a commoner of St Albans-hall in 1581 aged 20 years, took one degree in arts and no more in this university, entred on the phisic line, practised after in his own country, and was esteemed by the learned not only as an eminent physician, but a curious critic, especially as to matters relating to the language of his country. He hath written *Dictionarum Britannicum* which being left imperfect in ms. came into the hands of John Davies, who made great use of it when he was composing his *Dictionary in British and Latin and in Latin and British*. What our author Salesbury hath written besides, or when he died, I find not nor anything else of him, only that he was of the same family with, or very nearly related to, William Salesbury, whom I have mentioned under the year 1567, from whose efforts this Henry Salesbury found divers materials when he was composing his dictionary before-mentioned, and perhaps had received instruction from his own person, in matters relating to British affairs.'¹

And a later note adds: '...I have now in my custody [HS's] last Ms. of his dictionary, which one would think Dr. Davies did not see, because it hath many words omitted by the doctor. This he designed to have published with a new edition of his grammar as the title imports.'

Later scholarship has identified Salesbury's Welsh Latin dictionary as a work called *Geirva Tavod Cymraec* and there are Welsh and Latin lines written by him at the beginning of Henry Perri's *Egluryn Phraethineb*, published in 1595.

¹ Anthony a Wood, *Athenae Oxon.* Ed. P. Bliss Vol II 1815, p.225.

This lack of information about Henry Salesbury does not mean he was not significant. According to Professor Geraint Gruffydd, 'it may confidently be asserted that Henry Salesbury was one of the four or five most important linguistic scholars of the Renaissance in Wales...It is clear that he was an important member of a group of Welsh humanist scholars and writers centred upon the Vale of Clwyd and that his intellectual horizons were wide.' Recent scholarship, for example, has demonstrated the influence of the *Grammatica* on the important French scholar Pierre de la Ramee.²

Until evidence of further activity comes to light, we must imagine Henry Salesbury content to lead a quiet and private life, practising medicine most likely in Denbigh, occasionally perhaps visiting his father's house at Dolbelydr and writing in the solar, surrounded by the fractious and closely woven events of Elizabethan Denbighshire.

The Welsh language in the 16th century

When the Battle of Bosworth brought the Wars of the Roses to a close and gave victory to the red rose of the Lancastrians, Henry Tudor became Henry VII. He was one quarter Welsh, although it was his English blood that gave him claim to the throne. The unification of Wales with England came about therefore rather more because the Welsh identified themselves with the Tudors than because his family identified themselves with the Welsh.

A series of legislation passed between 1536 and 1543 brought Wales entirely under the authority of the English crown. The Welsh language was proscribed for almost all legal and official purposes; English law replaced those of Hywel Dda and the Welsh enjoyed the same political and judicial status as the English. The Welsh gentry were actively involved with the Court and increasingly looked beyond Welsh culture and language.

Commercially active, they reached the cities of Europe, where they bought books in English and Latin and absorbed ideas from the revived Classical culture as it spread through the Renaissance. Just as everywhere else in the kingdom, inhabitants of north west Wales had access not just to learning or wealth but also to the leading figures in the Low Countries and Italy. Robert Wynn, builder of Plas Mawr in Conwy, is typical of this interchange of ideas and culture, travelling

² *Pers. Comm.* 10th August 1998

with his patron Sir Philip Hoby to the Low Countries and perhaps also on Hoby's embassy to Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in late 1540s. By also copying the works of their own antiquity, the Welsh humanists' participation in the literary renaissance across Europe ensured that the Welsh literary tradition survived.

There were other incentives to preserve and promote the Welsh language and make it accessible. With the Tudor administrative reforms and the Protestant Reformation, language became increasingly a written as well as a spoken medium – and Welsh was subordinate in government to English. However, far more lay behind the movement to encapsulate the Welsh tongue than a desire to facilitate the English civil service.

The Bible Translators

'If the Bible had not been translated [into Welsh] the language would undoubtedly have been gravely weakened, might possibly have become extinct', wrote Professor Glanmor Williams, historian of the Welsh Reformation. The English were liberated by the Reformation, which enabled them to read the Bible in their own language. But for most Welshmen, English was as incomprehensible as the former Latin.

For the Welsh gentry, assimilation into the new 'British' society was far preferable to being locked into the previous system of apartheid. Yet the linguistic implications of the Act of Union and the establishment of the English language as the language of the Church of England were of great significance for the future of the Welsh language. It fell to scholarly gentry to step into the breach and to nurture the Welsh language, which they did from the perspective of Renaissance learning heavily influenced by both the new Protestantism and the revival of ancient languages and texts. In a context in which English was still emerging from under the Norman yoke, these gentry saw the Welsh language as on a par with Latin and Greek. This led to a quest to study ancient manuscripts, the analysis of the grammatical structure of the language and the publication of dictionaries and religious works in Welsh.

Protestantism was a religion of conversion, focusing on a personal reading of the Bible. Its availability in the vernacular was of crucial importance as was its widespread availability through the presses. Any imposition of the English

language as the language of religion in Wales would pose a major political as well as doctrinal problem.

When William Salesbury (c1520- c 1584) published *A Dictionary in Englyshe and Welsh* in 1547, his intention was to enable the Welsh to learn English so that they too could read the Bible for themselves and so adhere to the Protestant teachings available in that language. Alarmed at what he saw as the baseness of the Welsh tongue, William Salesbury had campaigned for a Welsh translation of the Bible since 1547. 'And take this advice from me,' he wrote, 'unless you save and correct and perfect the language before the extinction of the present generation, it will be too late afterwards.'

In 1563 William Salesbury and his associates petitioned the Privy Council and achieved their aim:

'AN ACT FOR THE TRANSLATING OF THE BIBLE AND THE DIVINE SERVICE IN TO THE WELSH TONGUE (1563)

'...her Highness'...Subjects understanding...the terrible and fearful Threatenings rehearsed in the Book of God against Wicked and Malefactors, the pleasant and infallible Promises made to the elect and chosen Flock...which Book being received as a most precious Jewel ... of all her Subjects ... as we do understand the English Tongue...

...Be it ... enacted ...That the Bishops of Hereford, Saint David's, Asaph, Bangor and Llanduff... shall take such Order amongst themselves for the Souls Health of the Flocks committed to their Charge within Wales, that the whole Bible, containing the New Testament and the Old, with the Book of Common Prayer and the Administration of the Sacraments, as is now used within this Realm in English, to be truly and exactly translated into the British or Welsh Tongue ...before the First Day of March.. One thousand five hundred sixty six. And that from that Day forth, the whole Divine Service shall be said by the Curates and Ministers throughout all the said Dioceses where the Welsh Tongue is commonly used, in the said British or Welsh Tongue...'

To implement the insistence of the English Court and Parliament that the Welsh people should learn English, the same Act commanded the Welsh bishops to place a Welsh version of the Bible and Prayer Book alongside the English versions in every parish by St. David's Day 1567. The idea was that this would help the Welsh people to learn English. Ironically, the provision authorised the use of Welsh in spiritual matters barely a generation after the language had been banned from secular affairs, making it a language of public worship. This gave the Welsh

language status and a place of honour and, if anything, probably delayed rather than hastened the people's grasp of English.

The translation deadline of St David's Day 1567 was met only for the New Testament, translated by William Salesbury in collaboration with Richard Davies, Bishop of St David's. William Salesbury made their purpose clear: 'If you do not wish to be worse than animals, obtain learning in your own language; if you do not wish to be more unnatural than any other nation under the sun, love your language and those who love it. If you do not wish utterly to depart from the faith of Christ...obtain the holy scripture in your own tongue, as your happy ancestors, the ancient British had it.'

In his preface to the New Testament, Richard Davies interpreted the establishment of the Protestant faith as a restoration of the true religion as practised by the old Celtic church before the arrival of the false hybrid implemented by St. Augustine and then the Saxons. These earliest translations suffered, however, from William Salesbury's theoretical perspective on the language, so that he ignored contemporary development of the Welsh language and tended to over-emphasise the influence of Latin. William Morgan's translation of both Testaments in the first complete version of the Bible in the Welsh language (published in 1588) instead brought everyday Welsh words into the New Testament. By 1588, Welshmen could buy the first translation of complete Bible in Welsh. 'To buy this – and be free from oppression – go sell your shirt, you Welshman,' wrote a Monmouthshire clergyman. Today, a fine Victorian monument recognising the achievement of the Bible translators stands outside St Asaph's cathedral.

Morgan's Bible was to be comparable in its stature and influence on the Welsh language with the effect of the King James Bible on English. Its universal distribution saved the Welsh language from becoming a bunch of disparate dialects and it had far-reaching effects on all aspects of Welsh culture and nationhood. Morgan too sprang from the circle of learning in north west Wales. His birthplace was Ty Mawr, a remote cottage near Penmachno, near Llanwrst, off the road from Bangor to Betws y Coed. Ty Mawr is owned by the National Trust and is open to the public. It now houses a collection of early bibles.

There were also more secular forces at work in this humanist era – the desire to equip the ancient language of Britain to take its place alongside the other

European languages as a worthy medium for learning and scholarship. Henry Salesbury was not alone in publishing a grammar; so too did Gruffudd Robert (1567) Sion Dafydd Rhys (1592) and John Davies (1621). Gruffudd Robert was a Catholic exile, an impeccable scholar and master of polished and urbane prose. His objective in describing and analysing the Welsh language was to show Welsh poets that they too could attain the standards of literary elegance he had seen on the Continent. Henry Salesbury's *Grammatica* may be seen in a similar light, not merely a tool for learning a new language but also a whetstone on which to hone it. In the words of poet James Howell, addressing Ben Jonson,

'.....thus to tame
A wild and wealthy language, and to frame
Grammatic toils to curb her so that she
Now speaks by rules and sings by prosody:
Such is the strength of Art rough things to shape
And of rude commons rich Enclosures make.'

This was the background against which Henry Salesbury worked on his *Grammatica* in the mid-1580s.

Henry Salesbury's *Grammatica Britannica*



**Fig 1: Frontispiece to the *Grammatica*
 (actual size)**

A small volume, some 7" x 4 ½", the *Grammatica Britannica* was written in Latin, the universal language of scholarship. It appears to be Salesbury's only published work. It has been suggested that the address 'To The Reader' of Philip Sydney's *Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*, 1593, which bears the signature 'H.S.' might have been his, although the 4th edition of this work, published in 1605, attributes the preface instead to 'H. Sanford'. In the preface to the *Grammatica*, Salesbury states that the work was written seven years earlier, which would have been in 1586. He must have gone down from Oxford around 1583-4 and apparently wrote the *Grammatica* while suffering from an indeterminate illness.

He mentions as his predecessors the traditional figures of Ederm Dafod Aur, Einion Offeiriad and Dafydd Ddu o Hiraddug, as well as his own contemporaries, Gruffydd Robert and John David Rhys. He defends the Welsh language against

charges of difficulty, irregularity and unpronounceability. Salesbury departed from the usual orthography in several respects in the *Grammatica* and invented new symbols for ng, ll, rh, nh, mh, ngh, ch, dd and th, all of which he correctly identified as simple sounds. Although he writes in Latin, his language is generally not classical but contemporary and based on dialect.

In fact, the *Grammatica* was somewhat pre-empted as a source for the language by Morgan's Welsh Bible, published five years earlier. In trying to impose a structure on what was essentially a vernacular language, Salesbury attempted to introduce classical discipline to the language, being keen for it to be considered a language of learning. Dr. John Davies (c1567-1644), the 'most influential Welsh grammarian of all time', called him 'medicus doctis annumerandus' and acknowledged a debt to Salesbury's work in his own dictionary.

Salesbury also worked on a Welsh-Latin dictionary called *Geirva Tavod Cymraec*, which he hoped to publish and which Edward Lhuyd (1660-1709), a pioneer of comparative linguistics, thought important enough to have copied by William Jones, one of his paid assistants. A copy is now preserved in the National Library of Wales. A Latin poem and another traditional strict-metre poem by an HS are included in an explanation of the art of rhetoric, *Egluryn Phraethineb*, by Henry Perri (1595).

The *Grammatica* seems to have been in use as a text book long after Salesbury's death, although very few original copies survive today. The Mainwaring family's copy was even inscribed with its schoolboy owner's name, 'John Lloyd Salusbury, His Book, 1798 Galltfaenan.'

The Publisher of the *Grammatica*³

The *Grammatica* was published by Thomas Salisbury, a London publisher who lived from 1567 until 1620. The indentures for his apprenticeship to stationer Oliver Wilkes in 1581 show that he had his roots in Denbighshire – his father was Pierce Salberye (another spelling!) of the parish of Clocaenog in the county. He was admitted freeman of the Stationers' Company on 16th October, 1588 and may also be the Salisbury 'a bookbinder dwelling in Powles churchyard', mentioned in the Cecil papers.

Thomas Salisbury seems to have kept links with Wales; he is known to have published at least four books in Welsh between 1593 and 1604. Perhaps he was a childhood friend of Henry Salesbury. Intriguingly, the DWB entry refers to an advance by Sir Thomas Myddleton of £10 in January 1593/4 to 'Thomas Salisbury stacioner, and Harry Salesbury clarck' towards the printing of a book called 'the sickmans salve, in the Welshe tong.'⁴ Myddleton (or Middleton) was the name of another influential family of North Wales: they intermarried with the Saluburys and a William Middleton ranged himself (initially at least) against Sir John Salusbury of Lleweni in the disputed election of 1601.

The Dedication of the *Grammatica* to Henry, 2nd Earl of Pembroke

The Herbert family is of Welsh origin, prominent by the late fifteenth century in Glamorgan and Monmouth. William Herbert, the first Earl of Pembroke (1506-1570)⁵, married Anne Parr c. 1534, sister to Catherine Parr who became Henry VIII's sixth wife in 1543. William was made an executor of Henry VIII's will and a guardian of the young Edward VI. In 1551, he was created Lord Herbert of Cardiff and 1st Earl of Pembroke; he was a member of the Privy Council and President of the Council of Wales. Remarkably, he remained in favour through Mary's reign and continued to serve Elizabeth I in high office until his death in 1570.

The 2nd Earl (1534-1600), to whom the *Grammatica* was dedicated, married Mary Sidney as his third wife in 1577. Unfortunately, no portrait appears to

³ Dictionary of Welsh Biography, p. 899.

⁴ E D Jones in *N.L.W. Journal*, i, pp. 52-3 is cited.

survive for either. Henry was a Knight of the Garter and held many high offices: he was President of the Council in Wales from 1586 to 1602, Lord Lieutenant of North and South Wales, a general and an admiral. The Pembroke family seat at Wilton House became the nursery of the English Renaissance; John Aubrey wrote that, under Mary Sidney, Wilton 'was like a college, there were so many and ingeniose persons. She was the greatest patronesse of wit and learning of any lady of her time.' Philip Sydney wrote his *Arcadia* at Wilton, dedicated to his sister.

⁵ This was the second creation of the earldom of Pembroke, the last Earl of the former line having supported the Yorkists in the Wars of the Roses and been executed after the Battle of Edgecote Moor in 1469.

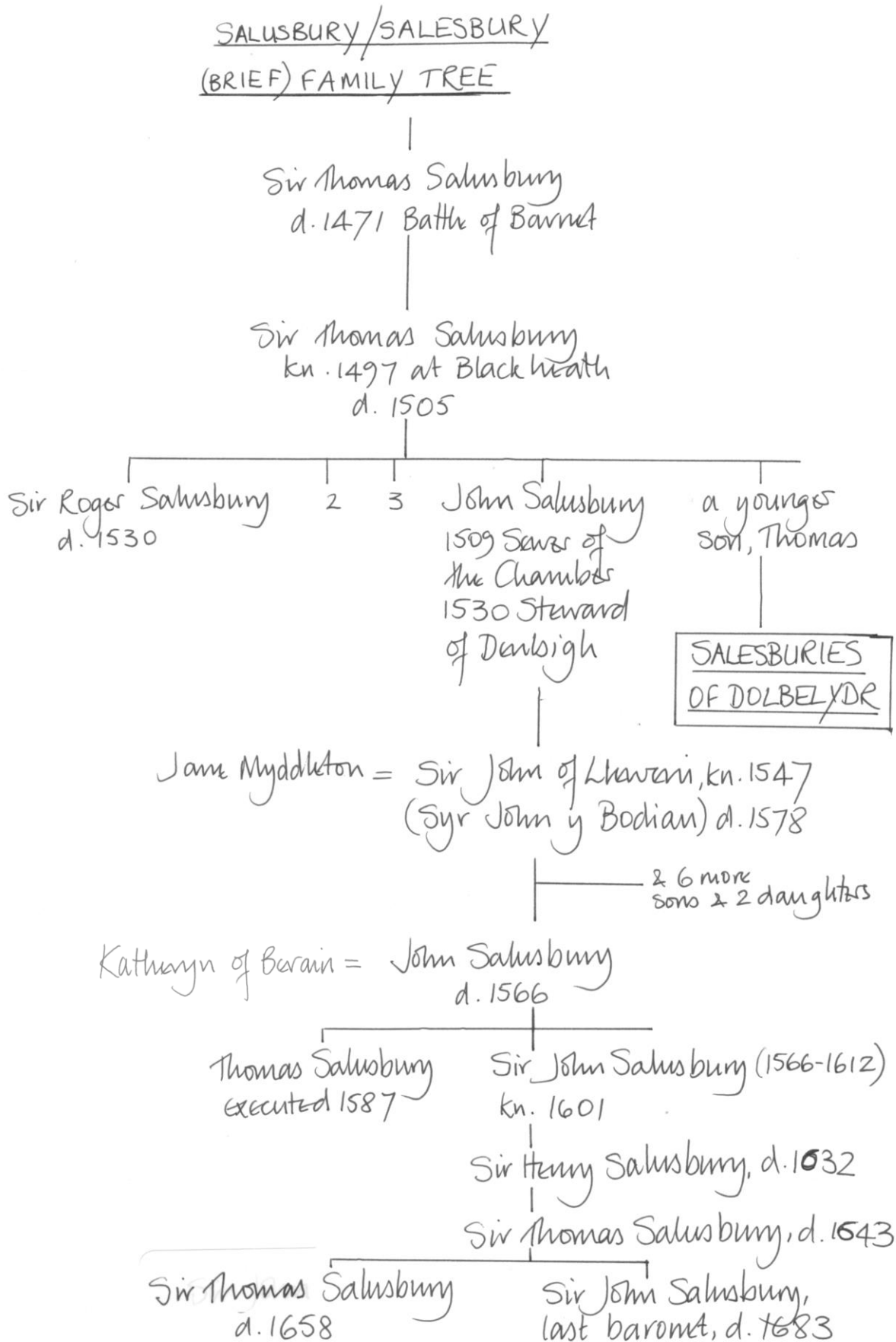


Fig 2: Salusbury/Salesbury family tree (condensed!)

The Salusburys of Denbigh ⁶

The Salusbury family began in Denbighland as middling tenants in the fourteenth century. The first recorded mention of them is a Letter Patent in 1306 which granted a pardon to 'Alescander de Sausbry – considered younger son of Lleweni and first to settle at Dolbelydr.' This gives credence to the hypothesis that the current house replaced an earlier one, part of its footprint tantalisingly suggested by the geophysical survey (see p. 9 in Volume I). According to Mrs Thrale-Piozzi (friend and confidante of Dr. Johnson and herself a born a Salusbury), the Salusburys claimed descent from Adam of Salzburg, younger son to a Duke of Bavaria, whose great grandson settled at Lleweni about or before 1334.

Little is known about how the estate was built up but presumably by the usual combination of application, enterprise and well-judged marriages they had built up a considerable estate and wealth by the end of the fifteenth century. By the mid 16th century, the Salusburys were among a handful of really great families in North Wales. There were two main branches: the main house, at Lleweni, had unquestioned pre-eminence in Denbighshire by Tudor times and had been in the area since c.1300. An offshoot of the family had also soon established itself, first at Bachymbyd and then at Rug. By 1600, accumulated estates had built up around these nuclei which almost rivalled that based around Lleweni. Numerous lesser branches had settled up and down the Clwyd valley and in Denbigh itself. Thomas and John became favourite names from the outset, bedevilling the task of the genealogist in teasing out this extensive family.

The Salusburys were active supporters of Henry Tudor and with the change of dynasty in 1485 leapt into a position of prominence. Although Sir Thomas Salusbury had lost his life in the Battle of Barnet (1471), his son, also Thomas, was instrumental in setting Henry Tudor on the throne and was knighted for his own bravery in the Battle of Blackheath which subdued the Cornish Rebellion in 1497.⁷ This Sir Thomas married Joan, daughter of Sir William Vaughan, Chamberlain of North Wales. Together they had had eight sons and, according to anonymous seventeenth-century genealogical notes in the Denbighshire Record Office and the Welsh DNB, the Salesburies of Dolbelydr were descended from

⁶Based on Smith, W J, *Calendar of Salusbury Correspondence, 1553-c1700* (UWP, 1954)

⁷ In 1497 15,000 Cornish rebels marched on London in protest against taxes to be raised by Henry VII for war on Scotland, under Lord Audley. Giles, Lord Aubeney, led the victorious forces for the king.

one of these younger sons, whose name was also Thomas.⁸ Sadly, no further firm evidence of this branch of the family has yet emerged until our 'eminent physician [and] curious critick' Henry publishes his *Grammatica Britannica* in 1593.

Sir Thomas (of Blackheath fame) died in 1505 and was buried in Denbigh before the high altar. Anecdotally, it was around then that some part of the family took up residence at Galltfaenan after buying the estate from the Ravenscourt family.⁹ It was Sir Thomas's fourth son, John, who built upon his father's credit with the Crown to form the bedrock of the Salusbury's pre-eminence in Denbigh county through the sixteenth century. John, his son and his great-grandson (also John Salusbury!) were to become mainstays of royal administration in Denbighshire and their careers take us to the heart of the Tudor administration and Court. Increasingly distant cousins of the Salesburys of Dolbelydr they may have become, but their activities have left more traces and provide a vivid picture of life in Tudor County Denbigh, the wider backdrop to life in the quiet Elwy valley.

There were thus four John Salusburies (spelt in various ways) active in Denbighshire between 1530 and 1580. First came John, fourth son of Sir Thomas who had perhaps the most illustrious career of the four. For most of Henry VIII's reign, it was this John Salusbury who held centre stage in Denbighshire (not, as has sometimes been claimed, the next John). Correspondence survives between this John and men such as Thomas Cromwell, his successor as Secretary Wriothesley and even Henry VIII himself. In 1509 this John Salusbury was given the (largely ceremonial) title of Sewer of the Chamber in Henry's household and later became Squire of the Body of the king. In 1530, he became steward of the lordship of Denbigh and constable of the castle.

In 1536, the shire as a unit of governance was extended to Wales in the so-called 'shiring of Wales.' This brought with it the right to be represented by two MPs, the first time the Welsh had had a voice at Westminster. The price for that voice, of course, was full integration into the Tudor regime. John Salusbury became the first chancellor and Chamberlain of North Wales – even though he

⁸ Denbighshire Record Office DD/GA/1048. Richard Llweyd (1752-1835) confirms and enlarges slightly upon this genealogy in his own notes – see DRO DD/GA/1387.

⁹ The present Galltfaenan Hall is more recent, having been built in three phases: early- and mid-nineteenth century with a further extension added in 1926 for Sir Ernest Tate of the sugar refining family. The Tates bought the house from the Mainwaring family, Dolbelydr still belonging to the Galltfaenan estate at this time.

had previously argued that the country was already well ruled with fewer officers and less

expense than under the new arrangements. Henry's wider agenda was to bring Wales within his taxation system, ensure its loyalty to his Reformation and suppress any pockets of nostalgia for the religion of Rome. The Chamberlain was the Crown's principal financial officer, authorised to collect the King's revenues, pay fees and wages and control expenditure on local needs. As one of the leaders of the English force in Ireland in 1534-5, John was also a member of the Council of Ireland. (The proximity of this part of Wales to Ireland meant that its leaders and men were often to play a prominent part in affairs across the straits of Anglesey, as many were to find to their cost during the Earl of Essex's foolhardy rebellion against Elizabeth in 1601.)

A reference in one of John's letters shows he represented the county at Westminster as a knight of the shire in 1539, a year for which the official returns are missing. He was high sheriff in 1541 and served again as knight of the shire for the Parliament summoned in 1542. From then on, the Salusbury family both represented the county and served as high sheriff on a regular basis - this John's nephew, Sir John Salusbury (d.1578) was knight of the shire four or five times and sheriff twice, as well as himself holding the position of Chamberlain of North Wales.

Our 'second' John Salusbury was Sir John of Lleweni, pageboy to Henry VIII and who acquired his title in 1530. He was known as 'Syr John y Bodiau' or Sir John the Strong: a poet describes his extraordinary strength – no other man could bend and string the 'yew tree' that was his bow, his arrows were like 'long aspens.'¹⁰ He was 'comely and graceful, like a lamb in temperament but a lion in rage.'¹⁰ He is also best known for his time as Chamberlain of Wales. He was made a Knight of the Carpet (an arcane title of uncertain meaning!) at the accession of Edward VI, a reward perhaps for stalwart support of the Protestant regime in years when there was a real fear of counter-Reformation rebellion in Wales. Sir John, however, did well out of the Dissolution, laying claim to the priory at St Asaph and apparently obtaining illegal possession of the chapter seal and using it to forge leases with the connivance of his kinsman, the Dean. We also know from a fine levied on his lands in 1566 that Sir John held property in Galltfaenan.¹¹ He married Jane Myddleton, of another great local family based in

¹⁰ Williams (1860), p. 199.

¹¹ *Lleweni Deeds*, No. 3/162, *National Library of Wales*.

Chester, with whom he had seven sons and two daughters and he died in 1578. He is buried with his wife in a fine tomb at St. Marcella's Church in Denbigh. Our 'third' John Salusbury was his eldest son, who became the first husband of Katheryn of Berain¹² but died before his father in 1566 (and is not to be confused with a further John Salesbury who held Bachymbyd from 1551 to 1580). Katheryn was a famous beauty and considerable heiress, whose second husband allegedly proposed to her on her way to John's funeral, thus thwarting his rival for her affections, Maurice Wynn. Maurice bided his time and became her third husband in 1573, making Katheryn stepmother to his fifteen children by his own two previous marriages.

¹² Katheryn of Berain (1535-1591) is said to have been a cousin and ward of Queen Elizabeth, who therefore had to give express consent to the marriage. She was to have three more husbands, six of her own children, at least sixteen stepchildren and thirty two surviving blood grandchildren. This earned her the title of 'Mother of Wales.' Mrs Thrale, *nee* Salusbury and confidante of Doctor Samuel Johnson, claimed direct descent from this Sir John Salusbury.



Fig 3: Katheryn of Berain, 'Mam Cymru', by Adriaen van Cronenburgh, c.1568
(National Museum of Wales)



Fig 4: John Salusbury, d.1566, on his parents' tomb at St. Marcella's Church, Denbigh.

Soon after Sir John the Strong's death in 1578, scandal shook the family, seriously damaging both their local influence and standing at Court for almost a decade. Thomas Salusbury, eldest son of John and Catherine of Berain, was convicted of complicity in the Babington conspiracy to replace Elizabeth I with Mary Queen of Scots. Thomas was executed in September 1587, declaring bravely on the scaffold 'I have lyved a catholique, and so I will die.'¹³ His younger brother (our 'fourth' John!) inherited the knighthood and estates.

This John Salusbury was a splendid Elizabethan figure (albeit a minor one). He was born posthumously in 1566/7 and matriculated from Jesus College, Oxford on November 14th 1581. He married Ursula, natural (and acknowledged) daughter of the 4th Earl of Derby in 1586, with whom he had a somewhat rocky relationship although she bore him nine children. He was a patron of the arts, an intimate of the poets and indeed a poet himself. John Salusbury is thought to have been an early patron of Shakespeare, who dedicated a sonnet, *The Phoenix and the Turtle* to him. Perhaps it was John who suggested to his distant kinsman Henry Salesbury that he should dedicate his *Grammatica Britannica* to another of Shakespeare's patrons, the 2nd Earl of Pembroke, drawing this distant part of the kingdom to the very heart of the English Renaissance. The Earl was Elizabeth's Lieutenant of Denbigh in 1598/9. It is possible that the dedication of the *Grammatica* formed part of the intricate Elizabethan exchange of perquisites and patronage. Was this part of the campaign to win friends at Court for John, beleaguered as he was by the taint of his brother's treachery? A letter survives in

the Lleweni papers written in 1599 from a J. Daunt to 'Mr. Salsbery,' in which Daunt writes 'noe crossinges did withstand your proceedings about....wherby your honorable frinds despositions might be discerned att Willto[n], where much gold is intended though kind intents as yett have [not?] prevailed.'

Yet just as earlier letters show that Sir John had had to fight hard to subdue the shadow of his brother's treachery, the back-biting continued. His father-in-law wrote on his behalf to the Lords of Council in 1590/1 and to rally other friends in his favour since 'Her Majestie has been incensed against his son Salusbrie.' Derby also advises John to bear himself with all humility, for 'manye eyes are caste upon you and sundrie there be that thirste after your fall...' John was the target of backbiting enemies all his life who constantly challenged his loyalty to Elizabeth as well as accusing him (this perhaps with some justification) of a certain disregard for law and order in his home county. However, John was more than a match for his enemies: he seems to have been able to adopt Sir Eubule Thelwall's advice to him in a letter of 1599/1601 to 'change the lion's skin with the fox, for it is better for this age.'

In 1593, Salusbury was involved in a serious affray in Chester with one Owen Salusbury who was seriously wounded. John fled to avoid arrest, finding refuge with 'Mr Trevors of Trevalen' – seemingly the same as Sir Richard Trevor who was to become such an implacable enemy when the two men contested the election of 1601. Owen Salusbury recovered and as Capt. Owen Salusbury was among the Earl of Essex's most active supporters.

John was made Squire of the Body to Elizabeth in 1595, one of only four to hold this honorary title at any one time and a great honour for the young Welshman. In the same year he was admitted student at the Middle Temple – a typical educational route for the middle gentry. That Christmas, to celebrate the renewed waxing of the family power, he invited seven bards, four harpists and two cowthers to Lleweni. Perhaps Henry Salesbury made the short journey over from Dolbelydr to join the celebrations. In 1597 John was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Denbigh, recommended for this appointment by none other than the 2nd Earl of Pembroke, then Lord President of Wales. Also in 1597, a volume of John Salusbury's poems had been printed and dedicated to him by 'Robert Parry, Gent.' Robert Parry seems to have been a dependent of Sir John's (perhaps his chaplain) and was closely acquainted with affairs at Lleweni.

¹³ *Hist. MSS. Com.* Report XIV, App. Part IV, p. 614 (cited by Carleton Brown)

John declined to go to Ireland with the Earl of Essex in 1598 to subdue the Irish rebellion – a risky decision at the time, but later vindicated when Essex first agreed a humiliating truce with the rebels and then in 1601 turned treacherous and launched his own abortive revolt against the Queen, dragging down many of his supporters with him. John Salusbury stood firmly by his queen, and for this he was knighted in 1601, thus restoring the family honour so besmirched by his brother Thomas's execution. He was later to claim in the Star Chamber that being thus knighted by his sovereign gave him precedence over Sir Richard Trevor, who had been knighted by a mere traitor, the Earl of Essex. Sir John was now at the zenith of his fortunes, on friendly terms with Robert Cecil and the greatest in the land.

Sir John's name also lives on today as a poet of some renown in his own day. In 1601, Robert Chester, a minor poet of the time, published and dedicated to Sir John a volume of poems called *Loves Martyr, or, Rosalins Complaint* written by themselves and others. It is this volume which includes, among other poems on the same theme, Shakespeare's enigmatic *The Phoenix and the Turtle*. Much has been written about this volume and its symbolism: whether the phoenix represents Salusbury (or his wife Ursula revived in his affections) or Queen Elizabeth or Love; whether the (dead) dove is Essex or Salusbury's wife Ursula or Constancy and why Shakespeare's uncharacteristically terse and bitter verses on the theme should have been appended almost anonymously to another's volume when he was at the height of his fame.

But by this time, factional feelings in Denbighshire were running so high that come the election in October of the same year, two sides supporting the rival candidates of Sir John Salusbury and Sir Trevor Richard found themselves face to face with drawn swords in the streets and church yard of Wrexham. J E Neale has written a lively account of this disputed election and of an earlier one in 1588, vivid illustrations of life in Denbighshire at the turn of the sixteenth century and episodes of which Henry Salesbury of Dolbelydr must certainly have been aware and was in all likelihood present.¹⁴

The dispute over the events surrounding this election resulted in Sir John being summoned to appear before the Privy Council convened as the Court of the Star Chamber, together with his opponents, John Lloyd and Sir Richard Trevor. Indeed

the Star Chamber proceedings contain many actions by Lloyds brought against Salusburies in these years - but nowhere do we find the name Henry Sale[u]sbury. The Salusbury family itself was riven in two by such faction fights. The two main lines of Llewini and Bachymbyd, who had renewed their links by marriage only a few decades before, now found themselves ranged against each other and the rift was not to heal for almost a century. As Sir Richard Lewkenor warned Robert Cecil in 1601 after trying to reconcile the Salusburies with the Trevors, the parties were 'factious and ready to follow those they do affect in all actions without respect to the lawfulness or unlawfulness thereof.' Indeed, their Myddleton rivals accused the Salusburies of protecting retainers alleged to have committed no fewer than sixteen murders in eight years during the 1590s, compounding for their crimes with cash.

After Elizabeth I's death in 1603, Sir John no longer found a welcome among the new Scottish Court and he ran into heavy debt during the last years of his life. Just before his death in 1612, he was on sufficiently good terms with Sir Thomas Myddleton to be negotiating a loan of £1,000 with him. A survey drawn up for this purpose includes land at Galltfaenan¹⁵ and a further list drawn before Sir John's heir, Henry, acquired a baronetcy in 1619 shows that he held property in Galltfaenan worth £6 per annum and Henllan township worth £40 p.a.

At this stage, during years when our Henry Salesbury may be presumed to have been active at Dolbelydr (although we have no proof of his residency except the reference in the *Grammatica* that he was at the house in 1593), the central concentration of Salusbury estates lay on the western side of the Clwyd plain, close to Denbigh. Henllan, Galltfaenan, Llanefydd and Llansannan formed a second block of adjacent estates dotted amongst the hills and secluded valleys around the Clwyd.

[There is reference in J G Williams' *Records of Denbigh* Vol I (1860) to a Robert Salusbury having been murdered on the bench in Denbigh Town Hall in 1617. No way of knowing which Salusbury!]

Sir Henry Salusbury, heir to Sir John, died in 1632. His son, Sir Thomas was another poet of some repute and was chosen to be colonel of a regiment of foot raised for King Charles from Denbigh and Flint in 1642; these may have been the

¹⁴ See J E Neale's *The Elizabethan House of Commons* on the Landmark bookshelf.

¹⁵ *Llewini Deeds* No. 3/223

Welsh troops who fought at Edgehill and Brentford in the same year. Sir Thomas served in the Short Parliament as knight of the shire for Denbighshire, the last of the Lleweni family to hold the county seat. He met his death in 1643. His elder son, Thomas, was only ten and he in turn died aged 25, so that the title and estate were inherited by his brother, John. Anthony a Wood says that the infant heir and his mother suffered financially for Sir Thomas's loyalty to the Crown, which may have been another factor in the family's relegation to the second rung in the county affairs. The next Sir John was to be the last baronet. He served as member for the Borough of Denbigh continuously from 1661 to his death in 1684, an unremarkable country gentleman.

Through the seventeenth century, the Salusburys of Lleweni gradually declined into comfortable provincial life, no longer playing a part in national affairs. By 1860, John Glanmor Williams could write 'The Salusbury family, so illustrious for ages in the annals of Denbigh, has no longer any connection with that place.'¹⁶

¹⁶ Williams, *Records of Denbigh and its Lordship* (1860), p. 190.

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THE PHOENIX & THE TURTLE by**William Shakespeare**

(included in a collection of poems called *Loves Martyr, or, Rosalins Complaint*, edited by Robert Chester, a minor poet of the time and dedicated to Sir John Salusbury. The volume included poems written by themselves.)

Let the bird of loudest lay
 On the sole Arabian tree
 Herald sad and trumpet be,
 To whose sound chaste wings obey.

But thou shrieking harbinger,
 Foul precurrer of the fiend,
 Augur of the fever's end,
 To this troop come thou not near.

From this session interdict
 Every fowl of tyrant wing,
 Save the eagle, feather'd king:
 Keep the obsequy so strict.

Let the priest in surplice white
 That defunctive music can,
 Be the death-divining swan,
 Lest the requiem lack his right.

And thou treble-dated crow,
 That thy sable gender mak'st
 With the breath thou giv'st and
 tak'st,
 'Mongst our mourners thou shalt go.

Here the anthem doth commence:
 Love and constancy is dead;
 Phoenix and the turtle fled
 In a mutual flame from hence.

So they lov'd, as love in twain,
 Had the essence but in one:
 Two distincts, division none:
 Number there in love was slain.
 Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
 Distance, and no space was seen
 'Twixt the turtle and his queen:

But in them it were a wonder.

So between them love did shine,
 That the turtlesaw his right
 Flaming in the phoenix' sight;
 Either was the other's mine.

Property was thus appall'd,
 That the self was not the same;
 Single nature's double name
 Neither two nor one was call'd.

Reason in itself confounded,
 Saw division grow together;
 To themselves yet either neither,
 Simple were so wellcompounded,

That it cried, 'How true a twain
 Seemeth this concordant one!
 Love hath reason, reason none,
 If what parts can so remain.'

Whereupon it made this threne
 To the phoenix and the dove,
 Co-supremes and stars of love,
 As chorus to their tragic scene.

THRENOS

Beauty, truth and rarity,
 Grace in all simplicity,
 Here enclos'd in cinders lie.

Death is now the phoenix' nest;
 And the turtle's loyal breast
 To eternity doth rest,

Leaving no posterity:
 'Twas not their infirmity,
 It was married chasity.

Truth may seem, but cannot be;
 Beauty brag, but 'tis not she;
 Truth and beauty buried be.

To this urn let those repair
 That are either true or fair;
 For these dead birds sigh a prayer.





HRH The Prince of Wales with Jacqueline & John Hawkins and Anne & Brian Kissane



HRH with Peter Pearce and David Alexander

