DAFYDD MANUEL (1626?-1726), TREFEGLWYS and his two daughters ANN & MARY (MALEN)

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by Richard Williams:

MANUEL, DAFYDD, a poet, who lived in a cottage called Byrdir, on Gwernafon farm, Trefeglwys, and who flourished about the year 1700. A poem of his, entitled "Bustl y Cybyddion,"—a satire upon Avarice—was published in the *Blodeugerdd*, and many of his carols and compositions were published in various collections about the beginning of the last century. Some have also appeared in print for the first time in Lloyd's *History of Powys Fadog*. He was present at an eisteddfod at Machynlleth in the summer of 1701, when he composed an englyn, which may be found in the *Gwyliedydd* for 1836. Some traditions of him may also be found in *Y Brython* vol. V., p. 209. The Peniarth MSS. include a large number of his compositions. Mr. Nicholas Bennett, of Glanyrafon, has also about thirty of them in MS. dated between 1689 and 1719, some displaying considerable merit Dafydd Manuel ("Yr hen Fanuel o'r Byrdir," or "Yr hen Fanuel y Prydydd" as he was generally called) lived to an extreme old age, being, it is said, 101 years old when he died. The parish register of Trefeglwys contains the following entry of his burial :—"David Manuel "sepult. fuit 16 die Maii 1726."—His wife Margaret had died before him in 1699. They left three children—a son David, usually called "Deio," and two daughters, Mary (Malen) and Anne. The daughters were excellent poets, and several of their compositions in MS. are in Mr. Bennett's possession. Mary was especially noted for her ready wit and power of repartee, and as a Pennillion singer with the harp—a mode of singing which to be effective, demands very great skill, a quick ear, and a retentive memory. In Bardd Alaw (Parry)'s *Welsh Harper*, vol. 2. we have a melody associated with her name, namely, "Hoffedd Merch "Dafydd Manuel," (The delight of David Manuel's daughter.)