

# BUCHEDD MAIR O'R AIFFT

PAR

MELVILLE RICHARDS.

The oldest copy of the Life of Mary of Egypt in Welsh is preserved in Peniarth 14, pp. 14-15, in that portion of the MS. which is assigned to the middle of the thirteenth century (*Rep. W. MSS.* I. 325). A later version is found in Peniarth 5 (Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch), f. xxviii *a-b*, written in the first quarter of the fourteenth century (*op. cit.* 305). This appears to be a direct transcript of the Life in Peniarth 14. The lower half of f. xxviii *a* is badly stained and partly illegible while several words have been rewritten in a later hand. The top left-hand corner of f. xxviii *b* has been torn off and the first letters of the first six lines are missing.

The Welsh Life is very much abridged as will be seen from a comparison with the Irish *Betha Mhuire Eigiptacdha* edited by Mr. A. Martin Freeman in the first number of *Etudes Celtiques*, pp. 78-113. Stress is laid on Mary's reformation by the image of the Virgin, the story, indeed, being treated in Welsh as one of a series of miracles performed by the Blessed Mary (*Gwyrthyau e wynvydedic Veir*, Peniarth 14, pp. 1-32).

The text is here printed from Peniarth 14 with some of the more interesting orthographical variants from Peniarth 5. The separation of words and the punctuation are due to me.

## WELSH TEXT

Meir Egiptiaca\* a bresswyllyus en tei y that deudeng blyned. Ac odena wedy e chymell o aniweirdep e kerdws hyt en Alexandria. En e wal honno yd emrodes e chorff e buteindra heb gaffael

e dogyn a hep dim gwerth<sup>b</sup> idi hitheu dwy vlyned ar bymthec. Ac odena pan weles eniverod mwyhaf en menet Gaerusalem<sup>c</sup> a chroes bryssyav a oruc hitheu gyt ac wyntwy parth a'r llong a rodi e phriaut gorff dros y lle a'e hemborth ar e mor. A guedy dyuot o'r llong ac etwa hep gafael e dogyn o'e godinap hi a gerdws gyt a phaub gan barhau en e drycvuched ene doeth e'r dinas kyssygreedic. A Diw Gwyl e Groc en e kynhaeaf<sup>d</sup> oed henne a phaub en kerdet en ryd e'r demyl gyssygreedic y proues hitheu vynet eno ac nys gallei, canys o amneit Duw e gurthledit. En e diwed wede daall<sup>e</sup> ohonei er achaus hi a dechreus llevein ar delw Veir a oed yn drws<sup>2</sup> e demyl, ac edrech arnei a maedu e dwyvronn gan dagreuoed, ac adav en gadarn na halogei<sup>f</sup> e chorff byth o henne allan. Ac odena hi a aeth e'r demyl ac en vuyd dihewyodus adoli prenn e Groc. A dyuot drachevyn a oruc ar delw e wynvydedic Veir a dywedut urthi gan emdiryret, ' Arglw/des ', hep hi, ' kyvarwydhaa vi en e lle e mynnych '. ' O cherdy ', hep er argluydes, ' e tu draw y Eurdonen ti a geffy orfowys da '. Ac ar e geir kvnnv kerdet a oruc en gyflym o drws e demyl, ac e rodes vn idi teir keinnyauc ac er e rei henne e prynws hitheu teir torth. A phan emiachludws er heul e nos honno e doeth y Egluys Yeuau Vedydywr ar lan Eurdonen. A thrannoeth wedy kemryt eno corff er argluyd e kerdws e diffeith e tu draw y Eurdonen, ac ena e bu hep [p. 15] vwyt en dieissyeu wedy y chymunav seith mlyned a deugeint, ac a vu o'e buched en ol, nyt amgen dwy vlyned ar bymthec e buchedocaws ar e their torth. E dwy vlyned ar bemthec kentaf e doeth e'r didryf<sup>g</sup> e cauas avlonyduch gan e chnavt, a chan ganhorthwy e wynvydedic Wryy eissyoes ny pheryglws.

Ac eissyoes pan nessaws tervyn e buched e kyuarwydhaws Duw atei menach, a Zosimas<sup>h</sup> oed y enw, a hitheu a vynegis i dav ef kyffes e holl vuched. A phan doeth enteu y'w vanachloc e menegis y' u vrodyr e gyvranc. A'r ulwyden rac wyneb Nos Yeu Cablut<sup>3</sup> egkylich goper pan ytoed e menach en kerdet er vn didryf gynt a chorff er Argluyd ganthav a pheth bwyllvr<sup>i</sup>

idav e hun, nachaf hitheu en dyuot, a guede dodî arwyd e groc ar e dwuyr kerdet en droetsych dros Eurdonen megys ar vaes guastat hyt ar Zosimas a chemryt eganthav corff er Argluyd. A gvedy e gennic idi o'r manach hi a gemyrth ychydic o'r bwyt, Ac vn agved<sup>1</sup> ac e dothoed emchuelut trwy e dwuyr a gvedïaw Zosimas ac adolwyn idav er vn amser hvnnv empenn e vlwyden pa furw bennac e mynnei Duw idav e chaffael hi y dyuot eno. Ac evelly e gwnaethpvyt. A phan doeth ef a gavas corff e santes honno wedy y chyweiryav herwyd cristyonogaul deuavt, ac en yscrivenedic en e daear ger llaw e corff : E Tat Zosimas, clad corfyn e druan Veir. A phan weles henne llawen vu cany wydyat e henw kynn no henne. A phan ytoed en emovalu pa furw e cladei yd anvones Duw llew idav a hvnnv a'e cladws urth e orchemen enteu. Ac evelly e bu diwed e santes honno.

a. P. 5 *Meir or eiff*.

b. Rewritten by the later hand of. P. 5 as *guarth* 'shame'.

c. P. 5 *yn mynet ygaerussalem*.

d. P. 5 *kanbaeaf*.

e. P. 5 *dyaall*.

f. P. 5 *halockei*.

g. P. 5 *dittryf*.

h. P. 5 *Zozimas*.

i. P. 5 *byyllwrw*. Cf. Dr. Davies, *Dict. Duplex*, Viaticum, commeatus.

Also WML. 40 Kyntaf o naw affeith lledrat yw syllu twyll a cheissaw kety-mdeith. Eil yw duunaw am y lledrat. Trydyd yw rodi *byyllwrw*. RB. 25 Ac ef aerchis udunt hwy baratoi *byllyryeu* a llenwi eu llogeu ohonaw ; cf. *R. Celt.*, XXXIII, 187, 15 et Hengwrt Mss. II, 146.

j. P. 5 *agywed*.

## NOTES

1. *Diw Gwyl y Groc en e kynbaeaf* : There appears to be some uncertainty as to this date according to Mr. Freeman's note, p. 108. The Welsh version obviously refers to Holy Rood Day on September 14. The *en e kynbaeaf* corresponds to the English poem's 'in heruest' : v. Trans. Cymmr. 1894-5, p. 129.

2. *yn drws* here = 'in front of' and not 'in the door of'. Cf. Irish *í ndorus* and see BBCS. VIII, 20.

3. *Nos Yeu Cablut* 'eve of Maundy Thursday' = the Irish 'Ash Wednesday' : Trans. Cymmr. 1894-5, pp. 118-9.

## TRANSLATION

Mary of Egypt dwelt in her father's house for twelve years. And then urged by wantonness she journeyed to Alexandria. In that den she yielded her body to prostitution without obtaining satisfaction and without any need for herself for seventeen years. And then when she saw huge multitudes going to Jerusalem with a cross she hastened along with them to the ship, and gave her own body for her berth and sustenance at sea. And after coming from the ship and still without obtaining satisfaction of her lust she travelled along with everybody persisting in her evil life until she came to the Holy City. And that was Holy Rood Day in the harvest, and as everyone was walking freely to the holy temple she attempted to go there and could not, for she was repelled by the sign of God. At last, when she understood the reason she began to cry out upon the image of Mary which was before the temple and gazed upon it and tearfully beat her breast promising firmly that she would never defile her body from that forward. And then she went to the temple and worshipped the wood of the Cross obediently and eagerly. And she came again to the image of the Blessed Mary and addressed it trustfully. 'Lady' she, said, 'direct me where thou wilt'. 'If thou travellest', said the Lady, 'to the other side of the Jordan thou wilt find a good resting-place'. And at that word she journeyed swiftly from before the temple and one gave her three pence and for those she bought three loaves. And when the sun went down that night she came to the Church of John the Baptist on the bank of the Jordan. And the next day after partaking of the Body of the Lord she traversed the desert beyond Jordan; and then she was for forty-seven years without food without necessity after communing. And what there was of her life behind, namely seventeen years, she lived on her three loaves. The first seventeen years she came to the desert she

had trouble from her flesh, and by the aid of the Blessed Virgin nevertheless she took no harm.

And then when the end of her life approached God directed to her a monk whose name was Zozimas, and she related to him the confession of her whole life. And when he came to his monastery he related to his brethren his story. And the next year on the eve of Maundy Thursday about vespers when the monk was travelling the same desert as before and the Body of the Lord with him and some provender for himself behold she came to Zozimas with dry feet over the Jordan as (if she were) on a level plain. And she took a little of the food after the monk had offered it to her. And in the same manner as she had come she returned through the water and prayed Zozimas and implored him to come there at the same time at the end of the year, whatever way God willed him to find her. And it was done thus. And when he came he found the body of that saint laid out according to Christian practice, and written in the earth near her body : O Father Zozimas, bury the body of wretched Mary. And when he saw that he was joyful for he knew not her name before then. And when he was considering how he should bury her God sent to him a lion who buried her according to his direction. And thus was the end of that saint.