

Randle Holme the elder and the development of portraiture in North Wales, c1600–1630

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In the course of completing his research on the Mostyn Family of north Wales,¹ Shaun Evans observed a crude but intriguing family portrait, most probably of Sir Roger Mostyn (c1568–1642), situated at the family's chief residence at Mostyn Hall, Flintshire (Pl 2). Although the sitter's name has unfortunately been omitted, an inscription written in a contemporary hand in the top right hand corner reads 'An^o Dñi 1621 / Æta^{is} Suae 53' (Pl 1). In addition, the monogram 'RH' features both in the top left-hand corner (Pl 3) and two thirds of the way down the left-hand side (Pl 4).

The monogram, as demonstrated below, proves to be that of the deputy herald, herald painter and office-holder Randle Holme the elder of Chester (c1570/71–1655). The discovery of the painting, the tentative identification of the sitter, and the more confident attribution of the painter, offer missing pieces to several puzzles, and add substantially to what little we know of early-17th century panel portraits in north Wales.

The painting itself is a small and fairly typical example of the contemporary English provincial vernacular: a genre which has only recently been considered worthy of critical attention and which is still far less familiar than it might be.² True to its vernacular form, the image is badly out of proportion, in this case with a head several sizes larger than it should be for the scale of the torso. The face itself is not badly painted, the ruff collar and cuffs are nicely done as well. But four of the fingers disappear shapelessly under a book in the sitter's right hand, while the thumb holding a book against the other fingers from the top remains poorly drawn. The painter limited his palette to four or five colours, against what has become an unadorned, light brown, almost orange, background. The sitter wears a linen ruff collar and cuffs appropriate to the era, and a sombre outfit, now appearing as something of an umber, with stylish buttons along the front.

Most distinctive of all are the two shoulder wings, projecting upwards like peaked epaulets and encircling the entire seam between the sleeves and the arm-hole of the doublet. That fashion reflects popular tastes of its time, its construction facilitating the convenience of allowing the wearer to change the sleeves without changing the rest of the garment.³ But the shoulder wings on this sitter have been rendered in the exaggerated and disproportionate manner which may sometimes be found in some other contemporary vernacular works. Its appearance here indicates that our sitter, albeit from rural Jacobean Flintshire, was conscious of contemporary fashion elsewhere in the realm. But it also tells us that he either could not or would not – perhaps didn't know how to – find and commission a painter capable of a more refined image or more experienced in portraiture.

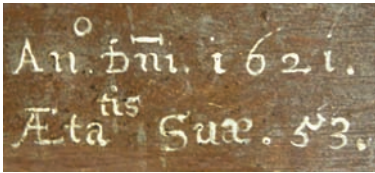
The painting has a complex provenance, but its unravelling offers essential clues to the identity of the sitter. The earliest known reference to it appears in Thomas Pennant's *Tours in Wales*, first published in 1778–1783.⁴ At this point it was housed at Bodysgallen Hall, one of Caernarfonshire's most prominent gentry houses, situated in the parish of Llanrhos on the Creuddyn peninsula.⁵ The hall had served as a significant local power base during the 16th-century residency of Richard Mostyn (c1522–92) – a younger son of

Thomas Mostyn (c1490–1558) of Mostyn and Gloddaith – who died without a male heir. The estate then came into the Wynn family though the marriage of Margaret, Richard Mostyn's daughter and heiress, to Hugh Wynn (d 1614) of Berth Ddu. The Wynns proceeded to occupy Bodysgallen for over 150 years thereafter, but by the time Pennant visited Bodysgallen in the late 18th century it had been re-inherited by the still-influential Mostyn family through the 1766 marriage of Margaret Wynn (c1744–92) and Sir Roger Mostyn, 5th Bart (c1734–96).⁶ Sometime before 1889 the portrait was relocated to the nearby Mostyn residence of Gloddaith Hall, before being transferred to Mostyn Hall in Flintshire, where it is now displayed.⁷

Pennant surmised that the portrait depicted Robert Wynn (d 1598) of Plas Mawr, Conwy, a close relative of the Wynns of Berth Ddu and Bodysgallen.⁸ In 1812, however, as indicated by a note of that date attached to the back of the portrait, it was acknowledged that the portrait was painted long after Robert Wynn's death and could not depict him within the chronological limits suggested by the inscription: 'An^o Dñi 1621 / ta^{is} Suae 53'.⁹ In fact, these same dates, pointing to the sitter's birth in 1568, rule out all of the contemporary heads of the Wynn dynasty of Berth Ddu and Bodysgallen. Hugh Wynn (d 1614) and his father Gruffydd Wynn (d 1605) were both deceased years before 1621; Hugh Wynn's eldest son and heir, Robert Wynn (c1581–1640) was born more than a decade later.¹⁰ One other possible sitter is Owen Gwyn (d 1633), younger brother of Hugh Wynn of Berth Ddu and Bodysgallen. Gwyn matriculated as a pensioner at St John's College, Cambridge, in Easter term, 1584, and took his BA in 1587/8, making a c1568 birthdate perfectly plausible.¹¹ And though he did not, in the end, gain any great honour in 1621, it was reported in that year that the King intended to appoint him bishop of St David's. Gwyn had learned of this, and is reported to have 'responded with great enthusiasm', but Buckingham wanted William Laud to be appointed instead, and his influence prevailed so that Laud ended up with the nomination.¹²

It could well be that in that short interval between his learning of the King's intentions and the loss of the nomination to Laud, Gwyn had a portrait run up to celebrate the anticipated prize. Yet there is much to speak against that possibility. For one, Gwyn chose the collegiate life in Cambridge rather than any close, continuing, or direct involvement with his family's regional activities in north Wales. Following his BA at St John's, he became a fellow of the same college in 1589, proceeded to an MA in 1591, a BD in 1599, and a DD in 1613. By that time he had become Master of the College (1612), proceeding to Vice-Chancellor in 1615. Several clerical posts followed, from which he drew most of his income, but he remained geographically removed from north Wales for almost his entire adult life.¹³

The painting itself does not show its sitter in the guise of a cleric or academic, much less one who assumed that he had been appointed a bishop. His dress is that of a gentleman, and the red book he holds in his hand has not been rendered to suggest a bible or a prayer book. Moreover, long-term



1 Detail of portrait in Pl 2 showing inscription with date and sitter's age

2 *Sir Roger Mostyn*, here attributed to Randle Holme the elder (1570/71–1655), 1621. Oil on panel, 30 cm x 24 cm. Mostyn Hall, Flintshire. Mostyn Estates Ltd

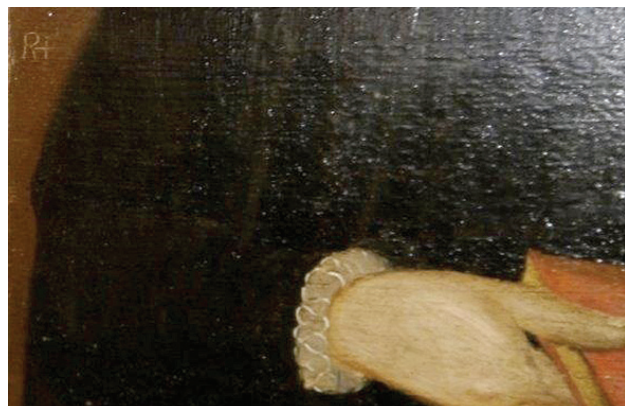
3 Detail of portrait in Pl 2, showing 'RH' monogram I (top left of painting)

4 Detail of portrait in Pl 2, showing 'RH' monogram II (left-hand side of painting)



Cambridge residence such as Gwyn enjoyed would surely have afforded him easy access to any number of more skilful and experienced portrait painters than the Chester-based painter of the work at hand. No portrait of Gwyn has been identified, and this is unlikely to be the first to claim that attribution.

An entirely more likely candidate would be a very prominent north Wales landowner closely related to the Wynns by marriage. The dates of c1568 for the sitter's birth and 1621 for the painting match favourably with those of Sir Roger Mostyn (c1568–1642) of Mostyn.¹⁴ He was born in 1568 and the year 1621 marked two substantial milestones in Mostyn's career: his first appointment to the Caernarfonshire Commission of the Peace; and his election to Parliament as knight of the shire for Flintshire.¹⁵ Both achievements were the sort of crowning events that commonly served as occasions for a portrait. The honours that came with Mostyn's appointments of 1621 represent one of the many climactic points in the family's long-standing prominence in the several counties of north Wales.¹⁶ That position extends back at least to the consolidation by Sir Roger's great-grandfather, Thomas Mostyn (c1490–1558), of substantial domains in four north Welsh counties.¹⁷ Sir Roger Mostyn's father, Sir Thomas Mostyn (c1542–1618) had established a virtual stranglehold over the chief offices of local and regional government. He filled almost every public office available to him and earned the Privy Council's distinction as 'one in great trust for Her Highness' service'.¹⁸ Like Owen Gwyn, Roger took a university education, matriculating at Brasenose College, Oxford, in 1584, after which he attended Lincoln's Inn.¹⁹ That experience would have imparted a sense of how a gentleman should dress. But, in contrast to his scholarly relative Owen Gwyn, he returned thereafter to his native region and devoted the rest of his life to building his estate through the acquisition of land and the exploitation of coal deposits. In 1596, he furthered his already extensive kinship ties to other substantial families of north Wales by marrying Mary (c1582–1653), eldest daughter of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir



(the subject of one of the other Bodysgallen portraits noted by Pennant).²⁰ This marriage soon produced heirs who ensured the family's continuity. Most importantly in the current context, Sir Roger Mostyn was outright in his assertions that a gentleman's focus should be on his estate and on local rather than national affairs.²¹ In one incidence he berated his father-in-law for allowing his heir to spend too much time away from north Wales on his continental tours; and in the 1620s he discouraged his own eldest son, Thomas, from standing as a Member of Parliament, fearing that he would be 'drawn to London', away from his family and landholdings, the perceived foundation of his future power.²²

Despite this preference for home turf Mostyn's economic and social standing in north Wales, and his achievements on that scene, sufficed to bring him to the attention of the court. Always on the lookout for loyal supporters in the more remote corners of his dominions, James I knighted Mostyn at Greenwich in May 1606,²³ and made him Sheriff of Flintshire (where he had served as JP since at least 1601) in 1608–09.²⁴ Sometime between 1617 and 1623 Mostyn gained appointment to Council in the Marches of Wales,²⁵ and in 1618 he became a Deputy Lieutenant in Flintshire at the death of his father, who had held the post since its inception in 1586.²⁶

Although the evidence thus presents strong support for Mostyn's identity as the sitter in this work, we cannot quite take that attribution as water-tight. It must also be said that two later portraits said to be of Sir Roger do not strongly resemble the sitter of 1621.²⁷ The sitter of 1621 has a more recessive hairline, and his nose appears much straighter. But, on balance, the painting is more likely to represent Sir Roger Mostyn than anyone else.

Thanks to the twice-written monogram 'RH', we can be much more certain about the painter. This is without doubt the monogram of Randle Holme the elder (1570/71–1655), deputy herald, herald-painter, and city official of Chester. Numerous examples of Holme's full signature appear on Chester City or Painters' Company documents during the many years he served as an official in both institutions,²⁸ and on death certificates and other heraldic documents that he signed in his capacity as deputy herald.²⁹ Though the opening letter 'R' appears somewhat differently in the full signature, where the contemporary cursive style both allowed for and encouraged complex flourishes, the 'H' of 'Holme' is clearly the same as on this portrait (Pl 5). In addition, the abbreviated signature 'RHolme' appears in a recognizably similar form, and in a similarly very small size, on numerous items in the 'album' of contemporary prints and drawings collected over the years by Holme the elder and his son and namesake, Randle the younger (1601–1659).³⁰ In those cases, including, eg, Holme's copy of Pierre Firens I, *Representation au naturel, comme le roy tres-Chrestian Henry III roy de France et de Navarre touche les Escroulles*, (c1609), it is immediately followed by the lower-case roman numerals written, as was then the fashion, as 'i' or 'ii' (Pl 6).³¹ The fact that no such appended numeral exists in this painting tells us that Holme the elder painted it before his son entered the trade: prior to that time a device to distinguish father from son would have been superfluous. As the younger Holme entered his apprenticeship only in 1617 and served for at least the statutory seven years,³² Randle the elder had no need to add the 'i' to his monogram on this painting of 1621.

The elder Holme led a remarkably active life, mastered a number of related occupations, and served in an impressive variety of offices both civic and heraldic. Having been apprenticed with the herald and herald painter Thomas Chaloner, he

married his master's widow in 1598 and began a career which included office holding in both the City of Chester and its amalgamated Company of Painters, Embroiderers, Stationers and Glaziers on the one hand, and appointments by the College of Arms on the other. The former activities included terms as City alderman (1604 *et seq*), sheriff (1628), and mayor (1633). As a member of the Company from about 1591, Holme served from time to time as steward, alderman, and master. His heraldic posts included appointments as deputy herald for Cheshire, Lancashire, Shropshire, and north Wales (1600–1603), the same counties except for Shropshire (1603–1622), and then for Cheshire, Denbighshire, and Flintshire from 1619.³³ The herald's office required a constant and close familiarity with the arms-bearing families of his assigned region, recording their births, deaths and marriages, weighing claims to arms-bearing status, signing death and marriage certificates, arranging heraldic funerals and designing their visual elements, and generally keeping close track of family events. In addition, Holme's appointment of 1606 allowed him to monopolize the heraldic painting required in those areas: to prevent 'all other Armorists and Paintyers ... to paint blazon and sett forth any funeral works escutcheons or atcheevements of Arms but such Painters & workmen only as he the said Randal Holme shall lycence & imploy being honest and sufficient men'.³⁴ If the number of his surviving signatures on funeral certificates of the north Welsh gentry or his preparation of pedigree rolls for the same clientele is characteristic of the rest of his heraldic work, Holme took his duties very seriously and did so over a long period of time.³⁵ Holme's heraldic role thus provided important and active links between the urban centre and its rural hinterland, townsmen and landed gentry, and among families on either side of the English/Welsh border.³⁶ Those same activities brought Holme into direct contact with the Mostyns. He performed due diligence in attending the 1618 funeral of Sir Thomas Mostyn, making sure it observed the appropriate ceremonial requirements before signing the funeral certificate itself.³⁷ It is his workshop which is almost certain to have produced the hatchments and other heraldic devices for the same event.

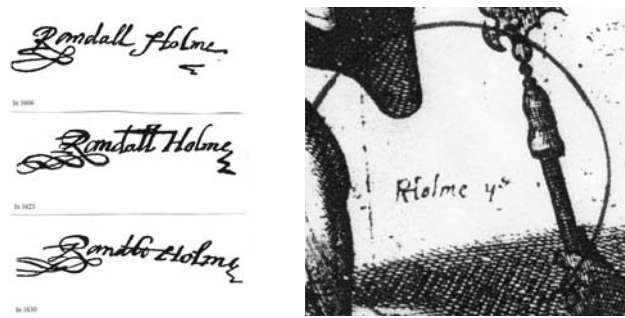
As if these duties were not enough, this remarkably active man also took his nominal occupation as a painter just as seriously, and did well in its pursuit. As early as 1602 he had come to know, serve as a surety for, and probably collaborate with, the young sculptor Maximilian Colt (fl1595–1645). Not yet enjoying the lavish court patronage that would shortly come his way, Colt had signed a contract to produce a monument for the Comptroller of the Port of Chester, Alexander Cote, for the Chester parish church of St John's. The tomb itself bore five sets of arms, almost certainly drawn by Holme. In signing on as Colt's surety, Holme identified himself not as a deputy herald, but rather and simply as 'Paynter'.³⁸ This is a rare and valuable reference. Very little evidence of Holme's commissions for painting of any sort has survived and there is none that shows him in the company of such an eminent foreign-born craftsman as Colt. But, unique though it may be, it does demonstrate Holme's enterprising approach to a career in painting. He had also, by that time, engaged his first apprentice. His step-son, Thomas Chaloner's son Jacob, whom he trained to a successful career of his own as a herald and heraldic painter of note, began his apprenticeship with Holme in 1601.³⁹ Up to six others, including his sons William and Randle the younger (both from 1617), are recorded as having apprenticed with him; along with at least five journeymen who worked in his shop, in later years.⁴⁰

Among the apprentices all but William Holme went on to highly successful careers, but not necessarily in heraldic painting. The most familiar of these is the well-known regional portraitist John Souch (1594–1645),⁴¹ who apprenticed with Holme between 1607 and 1617 and sundry of whose paintings of Welsh Anglo-Catholic gentry may still be seen. Edward Bellin (d 1650), who was apprenticed from 1624, is lesser known, but he enjoyed substantial success as a Chester painter. One of his portraits, of a gentleman of the Edwards Family of Rhual, survived at least into the 20th century.⁴² In addition, the well-known engraver Daniel King (1616–1661), sometime collaborator with Wenceslaus Hollar and William Dugdale, was apprenticed either to Holme or his son, Randle the younger.⁴³ In sum, Holme's interests, and his ability to train others, may well therefore have extended at some point to figurative as well as heraldic painting; and his tutelage fostered the leaders of the next generation of Chester painters.

This broadening out of painterly interests among the Chester painters from the heraldic to the figurative came in response to a growing clamour for portraiture amongst Welsh gentry families, and the absence of local or indigenous painters trained in that craft.⁴⁴ Responding to that new fashion, Holme will have understood the commercial advantages, indeed the necessity, of keeping pace, and thus with teaching himself and others at least the rudiments of portraiture. We see the response to such motivation in the impressive collection, undertaken first by Randle the elder and then by his son and namesake as well, of sophisticated continental prints and drawings of the later 16th and early 17th centuries. Known collectively as 'The Holme Album' and now held at the British Library, the collection contains over 150 prints and drawings of that era.⁴⁵

It is also here we find numerous examples of prints or drawings marked with the signature 'RHolme I' or 'RHolme ii'. Although none of those acquired items has been dated, the evidence of Holme the elder's monogram on the Mostyn Hall portrait offers an intriguing clue to the chronology of their compilation. Carried out in what is essentially a vernacular mode, albeit with a somewhat more refined working of the face, cuffs and collar, they stand in sharp contrast to the polished accomplishment of the collected prints and drawings. That collection indicates a desire to move away from that awkward native English craft tradition, and towards the refined, continentally derived styles and techniques of figurative drawing which was then coming to dominate the English scene. It suggests the sorts of imagery that Holme's former apprentice Souch strove to obtain as his career progressed. A close friend and associate of both Holmes, Souch would have had ready access to their collection as it formed. His surviving portraits show a much more refined understanding of the perspective, shading, and blending of colours: they set him apart from the cruder workmanship of the Mostyn piece. Although Daniel King concentrated on engraving rather than painting, much the same may be said for his more refined approach.

It is highly unlikely that his heraldic training under Thomas Chaloner would have exposed the senior Holme to such contemporary, refined, and formal figurative imagery or to the techniques required to produce it. Nor would he need to have taken note of them so long as he stuck to painting arms and designing pedigrees. But it cannot have been long (if at all) after the Mostyn portrait of 1621 that he began to take note of such work. He may have sent to London for specific items, but books and prints will also have been available through the Stationers who were fellows of the same amalgamated Chester



5 Full signature of Randle Holme the Elder, from JP Earwaker, 'The Four Randle Holmes of Chester, Antiquaries, Heralds, and Genealogists', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological and Historic Society*, ns, 4 (1890/91), p119. Top row, signature in 1606; second row, signature in 1623; third row, signature in 1630

6 Pierre Firens I, *Representation au naturel, comme le roy tres-Chrestian Henry III roy de France et de Navarre touche les Escroulles*, (c1609). With Holme's signature 'RHolme I' circled in lower right quadrant. British Library, Harleian MS 2001, fol36r

7 *Thomas ap Ieuan ap David of Arddynwent*, by an unknown painter, early 17th century. Oil on Panel. 67.5 x 54.3 cm. National Museum of Wales A 3691

Company as the Painters. At that point, in or soon after 1621, he will have wanted to learn as much as he could about this new work, thus to collect, and to use his collection in training subsequent apprentices like Souch and perhaps King.

The likelihood of Holme painting portraits has been noted before,⁴⁶ though no firm attribution of any work to him has hitherto been made for any specific portrait. He had tentatively been credited with the 1610 portrait of another Flintshireman, Thomas ap Ieuan ap David of Arddynwent, Mold, now held by the National Museum of Wales (Pl 7). It might be expected that such a local patron would conveniently have looked to nearby Chester to have his portrait done. The prominence and intricacy of the coat

of arms in that work suggests authorship by someone with Holme's heraldic experience, and Holme was certainly an active herald and herald painter by 1610. In addition, a poorly written monogram on the painted surface had been read by some as 'RHF', and interpreted as 'Randle Holme *fecit*'. For these reasons the Museum had initially suggested a tentative attribution to Holme, which was taken up in a 2002 doctoral thesis.⁴⁷

Yet a close and lengthy examination of that work in July 2008 produced no such impression.⁴⁸ The Museum itself subsequently changed the attribution on its on-line catalogue to 'British School, 17th century', and the author of that same thesis has also withdrawn that attribution in a later work.⁴⁹ The monogram now appears to read 'TR', or 'TRF', which might point to Holme's contemporary and fellow Cestrian painter, the obscure Thomas Robinson, but not to Holme.⁵⁰

The confident assignment of the Mostyn Hall portrait to Randle Holme the elder allows us a little more insight into both painting and painter, and also to the portrayal of the Welsh gentry in general in the early 17th century. As for the portrait, the commission itself from a client/acquaintance in 1621 is likely to have marked the point at which Holme recognized the importance of taking on board some of the more refined portraiture that was then making its way into provincial England from the continent and the court. It suggests that he was beginning to understand the more refined approach during the course of completing this very work, as the facial features, cuffs and collar seem more confidently rendered than the anatomical proportions or perspective of the whole.

That observation points to the likelihood of a workshop painting in which Holme, a man with myriad other obligations on his plate, carried out the more accomplished parts and left the rest to an apprentice or journeyman. We know that Holme did have two apprentices on hand at that time, his sons William and Randle the younger, with the former much further along in his training.⁵¹ William Holme completed his apprenticeship and gained admission both to the freemasonry of Chester and the ranks of the painters' Company in the following year.⁵²

Finally, the painting itself, and its attribution to Holme, tells us a little more about north Welsh gentry portraiture at this time. It is no doubt still the case that many contemporary Welsh portraits remain in private hands and remain unfamiliar to the public, and also the case that very few painters of such portraits have become known to us.⁵³ Most contemporary Welsh portraits, like their English counterparts, remain unattributed. Any such firm attribution of a Welsh portrait of this era makes an important discovery in and of itself.

It also sheds some light on the circumstances by which these Welsh portraits were commissioned. We do know that at least a few prominent Welsh families had painters resident in their houses for indeterminate periods of time. Although they probably spent most of their time doing heraldic or decorative work, some of them were no doubt capable of portraiture as well. A 1584 exchange between William, 3rd Earl of Worcester, from his seat at Raglan Castle in Monmouthshire to his friend Sir John Scudamore of Holme Lacy across the border in Hereford obviously derives from a different part of Wales, but it does offer an interesting insight into such practice. (William Seymour was not, of course, an ethnic Welshman, but he administered his vast Welsh holdings from his princely seat at Raglan.) Worcester wanted a copy of a painting, presumably a portrait, held by Scudamore, and Scudamore had offered to have his 'mann' paint it for him. Worcester responded as follows:

Whereas you doe offer that your mann should doe the picture for mee I yelde your thanks, ... but I am of opinion that I have a very sufficient workeman here with me. Wherefore if yo wilbe so good as to sende mee the picture rowled upp by this bearer I will cause my mann to Drawe yt, and it shalbe salfye returned againe unto you wth thanks.

In a postscript he added the afterthought that 'yf yor comynge ... my Paynter shall drae you also'.⁵⁴

Worcester's painter may have been but a temporary member of his household, or possibly a painter based in a nearby Welsh community who was available on call. Raglan was undergoing extensive renovations at just that time, and one or more painters may have lived on site for the duration of that work. A few other resident Welsh painters of that time have come to light.⁵⁵ Worcester's exchange with Scudamore also adds to the impression that painters were then working with some frequency on both sides of the English-Welsh border, some of whom were no doubt itinerants. The eminent and prolific English painter Gilbert Jackson, for instance, is thought to have done some of his work in north Wales.⁵⁶ The Devon-born/London-based painter Edward Bower or Bowers (*f*1628 or 1629–1666/7) may have copied portraits for Welsh patrons, as three of his portraits of Charles remain in Welsh hands.⁵⁷ And the Cheshire-reared painter Thomas Leigh the elder was especially talented and prolific in these years as an itinerant portraitist who worked in Wales as well as in England.⁵⁸

But most early- to mid-17th-century portraitists of Welshmen seem to have been based in border centres like Chester and probably Shrewsbury. Convenience alone would have played a large part in this choice, but local loyalties must also have played their part. Sir Roger Mostyn knew enough of contemporary fashion to have shoulder wings inserted on to his doublet, but he bore a sufficient distaste for London so as to seek a local painter to depict them. Given what we know of the portrait patronage extended by the north Wales gentry of the time, that choice obviously led many sitters to Chester and thus to the Holme circle. The two Holmes, Bellin, Souch, Thomas Pulford (d 1646), and (more peripherally) both Thomas Leigh the elder (*f*1616–1643) and the younger (*f*1640s *et seq*), and perhaps even the engraver Daniel King (1616–1661). Several of its members, including Holme and younger and Souch, must have been put in touch with their Welsh patrons through Holme the elder's heraldic activity. The elder Holme's acolyte and friend John Souch, now reliably credited with portraying over a dozen north Welsh sitters from the 1630s on, is certainly the best known and most successful of the group.⁵⁹ But the attribution of the Mostyn Hall portrait to Randle Holme the elder, preceding the other artists' known portraiture by a decade or more, appears to establish that Chester was the focal point for gentry portraiture of north Wales for decades to come.

The authors would like to thank Adrian Ailes, who brought them together, and Anne Thackray, who identified the print in Pl 6.

- 1 Shaun Evans, "'To contynue in my bloud and name": Reproducing the Mostyn Dynasty, c1540–1692', (unpublished doctoral thesis, Aberystwyth University, 2013) (hereafter Evans), pp80, 277.
- 2 Recent full-length efforts to bring such work to wider critical recognition include Robert Tittler, *The Face of the City: Civic Portraiture and Civic Identity in Early Modern England*, Manchester 2007, 2012; Kathryn Davies, *Artisan Art: Vernacular Wall Paintings in the Welsh Marches*, Almeley, Herefordshire 2008; Tittler, *Painters, Portraits, and Publics in Provincial England, 1500–1640*, Oxford, 2012, 2013; and Tarnya Cooper, *Citizen Portrait, Portrait Painting and the Urban Elite of Tudor and Jacobean England and Wales*, London and New Haven 2012.
- 3 As described by Aileen Ribeiro in Stephanie Nolen *et al.*, *Shakespeare's Face*, Toronto 2002, pp259–60.

- 4 T Pennant, *Tours in Wales*, J Rhys, ed, 3 vols. Caernarfon 1883, III, pp132–33.
- 5 For Bodysgallen see R Haslam, 'Bodysgallen, Gwynedd', *Country Life* (14 December 1978); N Tucker, 'Bodysgallen', *Llandudno, Colwyn Bay and District Field Club Proceedings* 24 (1951), pp68–74.
- 6 TA Glenn and LI NV Lloyd-Mostyn, *History of the Family of Mostyn of Mostyn*, London 1925, pp172–73, 197–203.
- 7 Anon, *Historical Sketch of Gloddaeth*, Oswestry 1899 (np).
- 8 For Robert Wynn see R C Turner, 'Robert Wynn and the Building of Plas Mawr, Conwy', *National Library of Wales Journal* 29, 2 (Winter 1995), pp177–209.
- 9 The note reads: 'Mr Pennant says this gentleman built Plas Mawr in Conway, but that must be a mistake for the dates on the buildings there are early in the sixteenth century and that on the bedstead from thence (now in the seat on the terrace) is 1518 and he appears not to have been born till 1568. But he was probably grandfather to the heiress who united Plas Mawr and Bodysgallen in 1683, who was then under age and her marriage settlement is in the heir trunk in the book closet with other papers. Feb. 1812.'
- 10 TA Glenn, 'The Bodysgallen Roll', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 80 (1925), pp219–27.
- 11 No record survives of Gwyn's actual birth date: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter *ODNB*), Owen Gwyn; <http://www.w.venn.lib.cam.ac.uk> ('A Cambridge Alumni Data Base'), Owne Gwyn; WT Griffith, 'An Additional Wynn of Gwydir letter', *National Library of Wales Journal* 26, 1 (Summer 1989), pp10–16.
- 12 *ODNB*, Owen Gwyn.
- 13 <http://www.w.venn.lib.cam.ac.uk> and *ODNB*, Owen Gwyn.
- 14 For evidence relating to Sir Roger Mostyn's birth see AD Carr, 'The Mostyn Family and Estate, 1200–1642', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Wales, Bangor, 1976), p193 (hereafter Carr, 'Mostyn Family').
- 15 Sir Roger Mostyn's office holding career is outlined in Evans, pp150–61. He served on the Caernarfonshire bench until his death. JRS Phillips, ed, *The Justices of the Peace in Wales and Monmouthshire, 1541 to 1689*, Cardiff, 1975, pp26–30; WR Williams, *The Parliamentary History of Wales, 1541–1898* Brecknock 1895, p88; Andrew Thrush and John P Ferris, eds, *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1604–1629*, London 2010: Sir Roger Mostyn.
- 16 The dynasty is well described in Evans, pp132–77, and in AD Carr, 'The Mostyns of Mostyn, 1540–1642', 2 Parts, *Flintshire Historical Society Journal* 28 (1977–78), pp17–37 and *ibid*, 30 (1981–82), pp125–44.
- 17 AD Carr, 'The Making of the Mostyns: The Genesis of a Landed Family', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion*, 1979, pp137–57.
- 18 Evans, pp143–50.
- 19 Joseph Foster, ed, *Alumni Oxoniensis ... 1500–1700*, 4 vols, Oxford 1878, III, p1041; Anon, *The Records of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn*, 2 vols, 1896, I, p108.
- 20 Evans, pp71–77. For the portrait of Sir John Wynn see Pennant, III, pp132–33; John Steegman, *A Survey of Portraits in Welsh Houses*, 2 vols, Cardiff 1957, 1963 (hereafter Steegman), I, p191, pl 34B.
- 21 Evans, pp88–89.
- 22 Glenn and Lloyd-Mostyn, *op cit*, pp126–27; National Library of Wales (hereafter NIW), Aberystwyth, Wynn of Gwydir MS 1186.
- 23 J Nichols, ed, *The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First*, 2 vol., London, 1828, II, pp48–9 and n7; WA Shaw, *Knights of England*, 2 vols, London 1906, II, p140.
- 24 EA Ebbelwhite, ed, 'Flintshire: High Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, July 1897, pp184–85; Phillips, *op cit*, pp105–10.
- 25 Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *Manuscripts of Rye and Hereford Corporations* (13th Report, App. IV), 31, London 1892, pp254, 270.
- 26 Mostyn Hall MS 180 (transcribed in NIW MS 6285E).
- 27 Evans, pp84–85 (the portraits are printed on p277); Thomas Pennant, *History of the Parishes of Whiteford and Holywell*, London 1796, pp60–61; Steegman, I, p191. NMW acc. A 15 is also derived from the 1634 portrait see Steegman, I, p139, where the sitter is incorrectly identified as Sir Thomas Mostyn.
- 28 Cheshire and Chester Record Office (hereafter CCRO), Chester, MSS ZG 17/1 and /2, *passim*.
- 29 Well over a hundred funeral certificates bearing Holme's signatures are printed in J P Rylands, ed, 'Cheshire and Lancashire Funeral Certificates, A.D. 1600 to 1678', *Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 6 (1882), *passim*. A list of pedigree rolls with Holmes' signature may be found in Michael Powell Siddons, ed, *Welsh Pedigree Rolls*, Aberystwyth 1996, pp9, 33–35. Reproductions of Holme's full signature are printed in JP Earwaker, 'The Four Randle Holmes of Chester, Antiquaries, Heralds, and Genealogists', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological and Historic Society*, ns, 4 (1890/91), p 119.
- 30 British Library Harley MSS 2001, see items 19, 21, 47, 66, etc. (hereafter BL); Robert Tittler and Anne Thackray, 'Print Collecting in Provincial England Prior to 1650; the Randle Holme Album' *The British Art Journal* (hereafter *BAJ*) IX, 2 (Autumn 2008), pp3–11. See also Earwaker, *op cit*, pp16–17, 119, 128; CCRO MSS. ZG 17/1 (np), entries for, eg, May 1591, July 1600, *et passim*, and CCRO MS. ZG 17/2 (np), 1621 *et passim*.
- 31 From British Library Harley MSS. 2001, fol 36r. The authors are greatly indebted to Dr Anne Thackray for identifying this print for us.
- 32 CCRO MSS. ZG17/2, see entries for 1617.
- 33 Michael Powell Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry*, 3 vols, Aberystwyth 1991–93, I, pp316–17; CCRO MSS. ZG17/1 and 17/2 *passim*; and *ODNB*, Randle Holme.
- 34 Cited from the original mandate in Siddons, *ibid*, I, p317.
- 35 Rylands, *op cit*, *passim*; Siddons, *Welsh Pedigree Rolls*, pp 33–34.
- 36 S Friar, *The Sutton Companion to Heraldry*, Stroud, Gloucestershire 1992, 2004, pp8–10; GD Squibb, 'Deputy Heralds of Chester', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological and Historic Society* 56 (1969), pp24–8.
- 37 BL Harl. 2180, f8.
- 38 Revd Canon S Cooper Scott, 'Cotes Monument: Once Set Up in St. John's Church, Chester', *Journal of the Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society of Chester*, ns, 8 (1902), pp6–7, 15.
- 39 Chaloner went on to draw and to collect pedigrees of families in Ireland, north Wales and Shropshire as well as Cheshire, working from time to time with the eminent herald John Philpot. CCRO MS. ZG17/1 see items for 1601; BL Harl. 1091, Additional MSS 26704, 35213, 47185, 56279.
- 40 Apprentices, and the years of their indentures, were Chaloner (1601), John Souch (1607), William Holme (1617), Randle Holme the younger (1617), Edward Bellin (1624), and perhaps both Daniel King (1630) and Randle Holme III (1644), although the last two may have apprenticed with Randle the younger instead. Journeymen included Jacob de Villegrande (1598), Edward Salford (1606), Samuel Harmer (1609), Edward Poyser (1629), and Humphrey Benet (1629 and 1630). CCRO MSS. ZG 17/1 and ZG 17/7 (np, see by years).
- 41 *ODNB*, John Souch.
- 42 Pennant, *Tours*, II, pp56–57, note b.; Steegman, I, p 207 pl. 37A; National Portrait Gallery (hereafter NPG), Heinz Archive, Painters' files, see Bellin, Edward; CCRO MSS ZG 17/2, *passim*, and CCRO MSS ZCR 63/2/131, fols29r, 39r, 40r; Rylands, *op cit*, p5. Our thanks to Stephanie Roberts of the National Museum of Wales for her help with this identification.
- 43 *ODNB*, Daniel King.
- 44 Emphasized especially in Peter Lloyd, *The Visual Culture of Wales: Imagining the Nation*, Cardiff 2000, pp34–7.
- 45 BL Harl. MS 2001; Tittler and Thackray, *op cit*, pp3–11.
- 46 Miles Wynn Cato, 'Nannau and Early Portraiture in North Wales', *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes A Chofnodion Sir Feirionnydd/ Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, 11:2 (1991), p184.
- 47 Tarnya Cooper, 'Memento Mori Portraiture: Painting, Protestant Culture, and the Patronage of Middle Elites in England and Wales, 1540–1630', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sussex 2002, p382. The authors are grateful to Dr Cooper for permission to read and cite this thesis.
- 48 Undertaken by Robert Tittler on 14 July 2008; thanks to Stephanie Roberts and Anne Pritchard of the NMW for facilitating that visit and inspection of the painting.
- 49 NMW ref. A 3691; Cooper, *Citizen Portrait*, p33 and fig. 26.
- 50 Robinson remains a mysterious figure and, in the end, perhaps equally unlikely to have painted this portrait. He was employed by the Chester master painter William Poole as a journeyman in 1609 and admitted to the Chester Company of Painters, Embroiderers, Glaziers and Stationers in 1612. It was not uncommon for a painter of that time to take on and complete work without membership in a guild. But neither Poole nor Robinson is known to have had any heraldic training. The painting itself is an ambitious and complex work for a presumably young and inexperienced painter. No other archival record of Robinson has been found. CCRO MSS. ZG 17/1: meetings on St Luke's Day, 1609 and 1612.
- 51 CCRO R.O. MSS ZG 17/1, *passim*.
- 52 CCRO R.O. MSS ZG 17/2 *vide* 1622.
- 53 William, Earl of Worcester, to John Scudamore, 6 November 1584: TNA, MSS C115/100/7373.
- 54 At roughly the time of the Mostyn portrait, these would include the Caernarfon painter George Griffyn, cited in 1617 when he apprenticed his son to a London Cutler, and David Thomas Sutton (or, alternatively, David Thomas of Sutton, Denbighshire), who was expelled from Liverpool in 1601. Cliff Webb, ed, *London Livery Company Apprenticeship Registers*, 35, 'Cutlers' Company, 1442–1498, 1565–1800', 2000, p49; JA Twemlow, ed, *Liverpool Town Books*, II, 1571–1603, Liverpool 1935, pp792–3 and no. 2.
- 55 *ODNB*, *vide* Jackson; Brian Stewart and Mervyn Cutten, eds, *Dictionary of Portrait Painters in Britain up to 1920*, Woodbridge 1997, p273; Christopher Wright, Catherine Gordon and Mary Peskett Smith, eds, *British and Irish Paintings in Public Collections*, New Haven and London 2006, p461; Steegman, I, p150.
- 56 Stewart and Cutten, *op cit*, p104.; Steegman, I, pp 5, 22, 235, 317; Wright *et al.*, *op cit*, p110.
- 57 Leigh also served as a journeyman in Chester, employed by the Widow Dewsbury in 1615, John Souch in 1618 and 1619, and Edward Bellin in 1642 and possibly 1643; Stephanie Roberts and Robert Tittler, 'Discovering "T Leigh", tracking the elusive portrait painter through Stuart England and Wales', *BAJ*, XI, 2 (2010/11), pp24–31; CCRO MSS ZG 17/1 and 17/2, see by year.
- 58 Julian Trueherz, 'New Light on John Such of Chester', *Burlington Magazine*, CXXXIX (May 1997), pp299–307; CCRO MSS ZG 17/1–2 (np, see by date); NPG, Heinz Archive, painter files, John Souch; *ODNB*, John Souch; Tittler, 'Early Stuart Chester as a Centre for Regional Portraiture', *Urban History*, 41:1 (February 2014), pp3–21.