

Orthography as a Key to Codicology: Innovation in the Work of a Thirteenth-Century Welsh Scribe

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DETAILED codicological studies of Welsh manuscripts are uncommon. However, work by Daniel Huws on the Hendregadredd manuscript, the White Book of Rhydderch, and various legal manuscripts has shown what fertile ground this can be.¹ Consideration of a scribe's orthography can in some cases cast further light on the production of the manuscript and raise possibilities which palaeography and codicology can only hint at.² Discussion of early Welsh orthography has only just begun to move away from the view of Sir Ifor Williams that the orthography developed in a single direct line from the Old Welsh system to the system of the Red Book of Hergest via the Black Book of Carmarthen.³ Recent studies are beginning to reveal a far more complex situation.⁴ The aim of this article is to consider one such case, involving three manuscripts written by the same scribe in the first half of the thirteenth century. It offers a case study in which a single scribe can be seen to be modifying his orthography in an attempt to represent more clearly a particular section of the phonemic inventory of Middle Welsh where the phonemes outnumbered the signs at his disposal.

¹Daniel Huws, 'Llawysgrif Hendregadredd', *National Library of Wales Journal*, 22 (1981-82), 1-26; 'Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 21 (Summer 1991), 1-37; 'The Manuscripts', in *Lawyers and Laymen: Studies in the History of Law presented to Professor Dafydd Jenkins*, edited by T. M. Charles-Edwards and others (Cardiff, 1986), pp. 119-36. For a more general discussion see now idem, 'Llyfrau Cymraeg 1250-1400', *NLWJ*, 28 (1993-94), 1-21. A version of this paper was presented at Seminar Cyfraith Hywel in Aberystwyth in January 1992. It has benefited considerably from the comments of those present, especially Dafydd Jenkins, Daniel Huws, and Thomas Charles-Edwards. ²For an example of such a supplementary study, see T. M. Charles-Edwards and P. Russell, 'The Hendregadredd Manuscript and the Orthography and Phonology of Welsh in the Early Fourteenth Century', *NLWJ* (forthcoming). ³For a summary of Sir Ifor Williams's views, see *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi*, edited by Ifor Williams (Cardiff, 1930), pp. xii-xx. ⁴See Charles-Edwards and Russell, 'The Hendregadredd Manuscript', and P. Russell, 'Scribal (In)competence in Thirteenth-Century North Wales: The Orthography of the Black Book of Chirk (Peniarth MS 29)', *NLWJ* (forthcoming).

It is well known that the same scribe was responsible for copying the three Welsh manuscripts, Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 44, NLW Llanstephan 1, both containing texts of different recensions of *Brut y Brenhinedd*, and the law manuscript, London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A.iii (Owen's C).⁵ It would also be generally agreed that, of the three, Peniarth 44 was written first by virtue of the fact that the first line of the text on each page is written *above* the top ruled line;⁶ English scribes began writing *below* the top line from 1230 onwards and the fashion seems to have spread to Wales at an indeterminate rate after that. The other two manuscripts show that our scribe succumbed to the new fashion, and so both manuscripts must have been written certainly later than 1230.⁷ Discussion of these manuscripts has so far been conducted on palaeographical grounds; the intention here is to show that consideration of orthography and scribal practice can take us further in our understanding of the chronological relationship of these manuscripts.

The general orthographical problems facing scribes of Old and early Middle Welsh centred on the representation of those sounds which did not occur in Latin; these were the fricatives and the central vowels.⁸ The dental fricative, /ð/ beside /d/, does not seem to have caused our scribe any difficulties; he regularly used *d* for internal and final /ð/ (i.e. Modern Welsh *dd*), and *t* for final /d/. As regards the central vowels, he regularly used *y* for /i/ (i.e. Modern Welsh *y*), though examples of *e* also occur. It is among the rounded central vowels, /u/ and /ü/ (i.e. Modern Welsh *w* and *u* respectively), and the labio-dental fricatives, /v/ and /w/ (i.e. Modern Welsh *f* and *w* respectively), that matters seem most confused. Generally the scribe is extremely competent in establishing and maintaining a coherent and consistent standard orthography. It is, therefore, all the more

⁵For Peniarth 44, see B. F. Roberts, 'Astudiaeth Destunol o'r Tri Chyfieithiad Cymraeg Cynharaf o *Historia Regum Britanniae*' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1969), pp. cxiv-clxxxiv; for Llanstephan 1, see the brief remarks by B. F. Roberts, *Brut y Brenhinedd, Llanstephan MS 1 Version* (Dublin, 1971), pp. xxviii-xxix; and for Cotton Caligula A.iii, the recent detailed description by Huws, 'The Manuscripts', pp. 119-32. This last manuscript, along with most Welsh law manuscripts, is here conventionally referred to by the siglum given in *The Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales*, edited by Aneurin Owen (London, 1841). For a convenient listing of Owen's sigla, see T. M. Charles-Edwards, *The Welsh Laws* (Cardiff, 1989), pp. 100-2. In the following discussion these sigla are given in brackets after the shelf-marks of law manuscripts. References to *The Ancient Laws* can assume a nightmarish quality; there was both a folio and a quarto edition with different pagination. Page references are usually to the quarto edition but confusion can be avoided by referring to code (VC = Venedotian Code, DC = Dimetian Code, GC = Gwentian Code), book, chapter, and paragraph number for Volume I, and to book, chapter, and paragraph number for Volume II. ⁶See N. R. Ker, 'From "Above Top Line" to "Below Top Line"', *Celtica*, 5 (1960), 13-16. Clear examples (that is, where the ruled lines are clear) of above the top line in Peniarth 44 are fols 8^r and 29^r. ⁷See Huws, 'The Manuscripts', p. 121. ⁸See Charles-Edwards and Russell, 'The Hendregadredd Manuscript'.

noticeable when he systematically departs from it. The advantage of this group of manuscripts is that it is possible to see a scribe grappling with and solving problems posed by his standard orthography. Only rarely are we offered the chance of observing this phenomenon, and the opportunity is particularly valuable when it concerns manuscripts which can, at least in part, be placed in chronological order of writing.

The clearest and most accessible description of the orthography of this scribe is that relating to Llanstephan 1 by Brynley Roberts, who presents an excellent picture of an apparently confused situation.⁹ The orthography of Llanstephan 1 has also been examined by Eric Hamp, who has shown that its 'usage is really quite orderly when properly understood in its own terms'.¹⁰ To represent /u/, /ü/, /w/, /v/, and the diphthongs /eü/ and /au/, *w* and *v* seem to be in free variation, e.g. *vravt* (310), *gvrthep* (29), *llafvrayav* (206), *wrth* (33), *wed* (132), *vgeyn* (78), *vadvnt* (7), *trweny* (100), etc.¹¹ The only exception is that *w* is not used for /ü/ in initial position. For /v/, *f* is used finally, and optionally in internal position, e.g. *llafvryav*, *aneyryf* (356), *cledyf* (280). On the other hand, *u* is relatively uncommon but is used to disambiguate potentially confusing clusters of *wv* and *vw* which could represent /vü/ or /vu/, etc., e.g. *wuy* /vuü/ (15), *wuryvs* /vuryus/ (288), *kytdvundep* (259); it is particularly frequent in spellings of /vü/, e.g. *wu* (83), *wudvgolyaeth* (298), and of /vu/, e.g. *wuytassant* (410). A further notable feature is the occasional use of *w* to represent /vu/, e.g. *wyhaf* (11), *dyrchawyt* (1), *gowyav* (101), etc. The same spelling also occurs in BL, MS Cotton Titus D.ii (Owen's B), e.g. *wyt* /vuid/, *awen* /avuün/, *wyall* /vuiaf/.¹² Confusion is less likely than would appear at first sight; as Brynley Roberts points out,¹³ *v* is the most frequent of these signs, being regularly used for all four sounds, while *w* is common for /w/ and /u/ but less so for /v/ and /ü/. There is one scribal idiosyncrasy, common to all three manuscripts, which is worth mentioning at this point: the rounded vowel /ü/ before /x/, which is spelt *u* in most manuscripts, is regularly written *wu* by this scribe; thus in all three manuscripts *wuchel*, *wuchelder*, *wuchelur*, *wuchot*, etc. occur. Hamp has argued that this spelling may reflect phonetic reality and that *uch* and *buch*,

⁹For Llanstephan 1, see Roberts, *Brut y Brenhinedd*, pp. xl-xli, and for Peniarth 44, Roberts, 'Astudiaeth Destunol', pp. ccvii-ccxvii. ¹⁰Eric P. Hamp, 'Labial Continuant Graphs in Llanstephan 1 and Havod 2', *Archivum Linguisticum*, 6 (1975), 71-76. ¹¹All three manuscripts use the 6 form of *v* (with the first stroke curling inwards to the right) in all positions; it is clearly intended as the letter *v*, and not a separate letter, and so in what follows it will be printed as *v*. References to Llanstephan 1 will be by line number of the printed text in Roberts, *Brut y Brenhinedd*. ¹²See Aled Rhys Wiliam, *Llyfr Iorwerth* (Cardiff, 1960), p. xl. ¹³Roberts, *Brut y Brenhinedd*, p. xli.

Huws notes that there is some variation in the compression and inking of the script:

From the beginning of quire 1 up to f. 177 the spacing of the text is generous, remarkably so in quires 2 and 3 On f. 177^v the scribe begins to cram his text; the amount of text to the page increases by about a third, without departing from the original ruling. His aim evidently was to complete his text of *Cyfreithiau gwlad* within the quire. We must suppose either that he had no more parchment ready to hand or, more likely, that he preferred cramming his text to having a single (and easily lost) leaf at the end of his quire. This bears on a point which will be made later: that when the scribe completed quire 5 the following three quires containing *Llyfr Prawf* either had already been written or else had not been conceived of by the scribe as a mere continuation of the text he was engaged upon.

Llyfr Prawf, Liber probationis, is in quires 6–8. It begins on f. 180 in a browner ink than has appeared in the preceding quires. Perhaps in order to match the compressed text of the end of quire 5 (supposing that quires 1–5 had been written first), the script at the beginning of quire 6 is similarly compact . . . and the number of lines is greater. But gradually the scribe relaxes again. By quire 8 the script is once more wide-spaced as in the early part of the manuscript. Before beginning quire 8 the scribe paused. He now had some new black ink. The pause may have given time for calculation; the scribe realized perhaps that he had more than enough space in the last quire of eight to complete his text comfortably.¹⁷

The scenario may not have been as simple as this; corresponding to the variations in compression and inking there is significant orthographical variation:

- (a) in quires 1–5 (fols 149–79) the scribe appears to have changed his standard spelling of /ü/, as seen in Peniarth 44 and Llanstephan 1, from *v* to *w*, e.g. *teylw* (149^r b1, etc.), *kanw* (149^r b15), *mynnw* (149^r b25), *bwuch* (149^r a4), *gwassanaethw* (149^r b13), *pwnt* (150^r b24), *talw* (150^v b11), *gwadw* (157^v a2), *racdwnt* (164^r b21), and in the diphthongs, e.g. *newad* (151^v a7, etc.), *gwnewthvr* (149^r a10), *pyew* (149^r a16, etc.), *ffyolew* (149^r a17), *vodrwyeu* (149^r a18), *lleyew* (153^v a14), *dechrewo* (154^v b16), *entew* (156^v a26, etc.), *wyntew* (159^r b18), *veychyew* (161^r b3), etc. The representation of /ü/ by *w* even occurs initially where it was never found in Llanstephan 1, e.g. *wffern* (159^v a17). The increase in use of *w* is not only in relation to /ü/; the /au/ diphthong is also spelt *aw* rather than *av* as in Peniarth 44 and Llanstephan 1, e.g. *gwallaw* (149^r a6), *arnaw* (149^r a13). The use of *w* has not superseded *v* completely; there are still some examples of *v*, especially in common words, e.g. *rannv* (150^v b10, etc.), *nevad* (150^r a2), *entev* (156^r a2), *minhev* (156^r a4, etc.), etc.

¹⁷ibid., pp. 120–21.

for example, may already have developed a phonetic diphthong, as in Modern Welsh *uwch* and *buwch*.¹⁴

Peniarth 44 reveals a similar orthographical system.¹⁵ For /u/, /ü/, /w/, /v/, and the diphthongs, *v* and *w* predominate, and *u* is used only to disambiguate clusters of /vü/ and /vu/, e.g. *wuan* (6^v21), *wuassei* (10^v24), *wudvgolyaeth* (7^v22), *wuyhaf* (8^v24), *adwuyrn* /aδvuin/ (9^v23), *wuy* (10^v9, etc.), *wuyall* (7^r6, etc.), etc. For /ü/ and the diphthongs containing /ü/, *v* is regular, e.g. *arnadvnt* (2^r1), *vdvnt* (2^r4), *kynnedvev* (1^v3), *rydhav* (1^v9), *yevanc gorev* (1^v12), *llonghev* (6^r3), *hwylev* (6^r4), though there are some examples of *w*, e.g. *dolwryav* (10^v9).

There are no major orthographical differences between Peniarth 44 and Llanstephan 1. Such variation as there is seems to be the result of a greater propensity for one or other of the various optical spellings. The scribe wrote Peniarth 44 before Llanstephan 1 and it appears that the latter manuscript displays a greater incidence of *w* for /ü/, e.g. *trweny* (100), *bwhed* (445), *llw* (163), *ew* (246), *talw* (118), *penteylw* (248), etc., although *v* is still by far the most common spelling. Similarly, the spelling *w* for /vw/ noted above in Llanstephan 1 only occurs very rarely in Peniarth 44. We know that Peniarth 44 was written before Llanstephan 1 on palaeographical evidence. How much time elapsed between the writing of the two manuscripts we cannot know. For the same reasons Cotton Caligula A.iii was also written after Peniarth 44. The question now is whether it is possible to establish the chronological relationship between Llanstephan 1 and Cotton Caligula A.iii.

The latter manuscript has recently been the subject of a full analysis by Daniel Huws.¹⁶ The section of this composite volume with which we are concerned is fols 149–98; it contains an imperfect text of *Llyfr Iorwerth* (38 of the original 88 leaves are missing). It may be helpful to include here Huws's collation of the quires:

fols 149–54	1 ⁸ , missing 4 and 5
fols 155–62	2 ⁸
fols 163–69	3 ⁸ , missing 5
fols 170–72	4 ⁸ , missing 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8
fols 173–79	5 ⁸ , missing 8
fols 180–86	6 ⁸ , missing 2
fols 187–92	7 ⁸ , missing 4 and 5
fols 193–98	8 ⁸ , missing 1 and 8

¹⁴Hamp, 'Labial Continuant Graphs', p. 73; see also idem, 'The Allophones of Medieval Welsh /x/ and /ü/', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 16 (1954–56), 284–85. ¹⁵See Roberts, 'Astudiaeth Destunol', pp. ccvii–ccxvii; references are to folio (recto/verso) and line number of the manuscript. ¹⁶Huws, 'The Manuscripts'. References to the manuscript will be by folio (recto/verso), column, and line number.

- (b) quires 6–7 (fols 180–92), the first part of *Llyfr Prawf*, are in a browner ink than the preceding text; it is still compressed, but with a greater number of lines per page. Orthographically, *w* appears to have been abandoned and the scribe seems to have reverted to the *v*-type of orthography seen in Peniarth 44 and Llanstephan 1, e.g. *pyev* (180^r b24), *entev* (180^r b25), *barnv* (180^r b30), *wadv* (180^v b10), *sarhaedv* (181^r b3), *galanassev* (181^r b4), *gwedessev* (185^v b18), *pethev* (185^v b19).
- (c) quire 8 (fols 193–98) is again spaced out and in a blacker ink. The orthographical differences are no less striking; he has re-adopted *w*, e.g. *lyssiew* (193^r a10), *verryew* (193^v b2), *pyew* (194^r b8), *phethew* (194^r b10), *gyvdedew* (195^v b8), etc.

There seem to be two alternative explanations. We can assume either that Cotton Caligula A.iii was written in the order we have it and that the scribe changed his orthographical preferences from section to section along with his ink, or that the scribe was gradually developing his orthography away from overloading *v* to a more even distribution of phonological weight on both *w* and *v*. There are, indeed, hints that he was experimenting with a greater use of *w* in the other manuscripts. If so, Cotton Caligula A.iii was not written in the order in which we now have it. Daniel Huws has already offered this as a possibility to account for the compression of the script in quires 4 and 5, namely that *Llyfr Prawf* (quires 6–8) had already been written.¹⁸ The evidence of the orthography suggests the first two quires of *Llyfr Prawf* may be the first to have been written, and at a stage before he had changed his orthographical preferences. The last quire of *Llyfr Prawf* (quire 8) and quires 1–5 seem to have been written later and represent the latest stage of his orthographical development. The changes are summarized in Table 1.

There is no evidence to show whether he finished *Llyfr Prawf* before he started quire 1. Likewise, we cannot know how much time elapsed between copying Llanstephan 1 and the various parts of Cotton Caligula A.iii. It might be suspected that quires 6–7 of *Llyfr Prawf* were written fairly soon after Llanstephan 1 and that there was a longer gap before Cotton Caligula A.iii was completed; it all depends on what else the scribe was copying in the meantime, and how gradual or swift his orthographical conversion was. It is clear that even in Peniarth 44 and Llanstephan 1 he was experimenting with extending the range of *w*. Indeed it looks as if he may have been thinking of using *w* for /vu/ to disambiguate the spellings of /vu/ and /vü/; *w* for /vu/ does occur in Peniarth 44 and Llanstephan 1 but seems not to be favoured in Cotton Caligula A.iii. It is, however, difficult to tell; this spelling feature is restricted to a few words, such

¹⁸See the section from Huws, 'The Manuscripts', quoted above.

	Above top line	Below top line	Below top line		
	Peniarth 44	Llanstephan 1	Cotton Caligula A.iii		
			Q 6–7	Q 8	Q 1–5
/ü/	v (w)	v (w)	v	w	w (v)
/eü/	ev (ew)	ev	ev	e	ew
/au/	av (aw)	av	av	aw	aw
/vu/	wu (w)	wu (w)	[]	[]	wu
/vü/	wu	wu	wu	[]	wu
/üx/-	wuch-	wuch-	wuch-	[]	wuch-

() = rare occurrence [] = no occurrence

Table 1: Summary of the orthographical variation in Peniarth 44, Llanstephan 1, and Cotton Caligula A.iii

as the lenited forms of *mwy*, *mwyaf*, and *bwyall*, and if they do not occur in the right grammatical context there is no evidence to work on.

Among the thirteenth-century manuscripts of the Iorwerth redaction of the Laws, Cotton Caligula A.iii is unique in having a long preface to *Llyfr Prawf*. Daniel Huws has raised the question whether this is the original form of the preface or an expansion of the short form found elsewhere.¹⁹ The orthographical evidence presented above adds support to the idea that the scribe of Cotton Caligula A.iii was intending to produce a copy of *Llyfr Prawf* for independent use; as such, he may have felt it needed a fuller preface than it would have had as an integral part of a full lawbook. Versions of the longer preface are also found in the fourteenth-century NLW Peniarth MS 32 (Owen's D) and in the fifteenth-century NLW Peniarth MS 34 (Owen's F) and Peniarth MS 40 (Owen's K), and also in the lost Llanforda manuscript.²⁰ It is probable, therefore, that our scribe's exemplar already had the longer preface. If his copy of *Llyfr Prawf* was intended for independent use, then it seems that his commission fell through and his text was subsequently incorporated into a full copy of *Llyfr Iorwerth*.

¹⁹ibid., p. 124. ²⁰See Aled Rhys Wiliam, *Llyfr Iorwerth*, p. xxv. The text of the preface to *Llyfr Prawf* in Cotton Caligula A.iii is printed, with variants and additions from D and K, in *The Ancient Laws*, VC III, Preface (= Vol. 1, pp. 216–17). For the F version, which is the shortest of the longer prefaces, see *Llyfr Colan*, edited by Dafydd Jenkins (Cardiff, 1963), p. 86, and idem, 'Llawysgrif Goll Llanforda o Gyfreithiau Hywel Dda', *BBCS*, 14 (1950–52), 89–104. For a discussion of these prefaces, see Huw Pryce, 'The Prologues to the Welsh Lawbooks', *ibid.*, 33 (1986), 151–87 (pp. 156–58).

item and the other material was subsequently added to it. The first two quires of the Black Book of Chirk (NLW Peniarth MS 29) contain the laws of court, followed in quire 3 by the laws of women; in both cases the sections did not fill the quires and extra material was added, proverbs at the end of quire 2 and *Breiniau Gwŷr Arfon* in quire 3.²³ It would appear, then, that originally the laws of court and the laws of women were regarded as separate documents, either because they might be required for separate use or for the simple practical reason that they were written at the same time by different scribes. Whatever the original intention, the first four quires of the manuscript were clearly felt to be a single document by the time the elegy to Llywelyn ap Iorwerth was added to the bottom margin of pages in quires 2, 3, and 4, perhaps in the latter part of the thirteenth century.²⁴ It seems, then, that there were complete lawbooks in existence and also separate booklets which were excerpted and copied from the lawbooks themselves. To what extent the full lawbooks were bound as opposed to being kept in a wrapper is uncertain. But it is quite likely that they remained in an unbound state for a considerable period, thus facilitating the copying of a single quire or a group of quires for independent use.²⁵

To summarize: the scribe of the three manuscripts considered here changed his orthographical preferences towards greater use of *w*, especially for /ū/. The order of writing was, therefore: Peniarth 44; Llanstephan 1; and Cotton Caligula A.iii. There are further ramifications for the last manuscript; he wrote the first two quires of *Llyfr Prawf* (quires 6 and 7) first, before he had changed his orthography. Subsequently, after shifting to greater use of *w*, he finished *Llyfr Prawf* (quire 8), and then copied quires 1–5, probably from a different exemplar.

Careful analysis of the scribe's orthographical preferences can, therefore, add not only to our understanding of the relationship between these three manuscripts but also to our appreciation of the make-up of Cotton Caligula A.iii. Orthographical considerations can take us a little further along the road, but not all the way, and many questions remain. What we can do, however, is contribute a little more to our understanding of the scribe himself. Daniel Huws characterizes him, at the time of his writing Cotton Caligula A.iii, as 'writing about the middle of the 13th century, perhaps not a young man, old fashioned in his ways'.²⁶ He was, however, a follower of fashion in his younger days in changing from above top line to below top line, and orthographically too he seems not to have been set in his ways.

²³See Russell, 'Scribal (In)competence'. ²⁴ibid. ²⁵We may compare the original state of *Llyfr Aneirin*, where each quire was held together with tacketts of twisted parchment; see *Llyfr Aneirin: A Facsimile/Llyfr Aneirin: Ffacsimile*, edited by Daniel Huws (Aberystwyth, 1989), pp. 8–9 = 28–30. ²⁶Huws, 'The Manuscripts', p. 121.

The only remnant of the quire signatures is a roman II at the end of quire 1, which shows that one quire has been lost before the present quire 1. It suggests that, when quires 1–5 were copied, they were intended to be at the front of the text with *Llyfr Prawf* following, as we have it now. There is now no evidence for the quire signatures in quires 6–8, that is, whether they were originally numbered I–III, or whether they were not numbered until they were incorporated into the full copy. However, the present quire 1 contains the central part of the laws of court. It is clear, then, that the original first quire, now missing, would have contained the preface and the beginning of the laws of court. If so, the scribe probably had an exemplar for the laws of court and the laws of country different from the exemplar which he used for *Llyfr Prawf*; for if, as is likely, his exemplar for *Llyfr Prawf* had a long preface which contained much material common to the preface to the laws of court, it is unlikely that the same copy would have had a preface to the laws of court. In other words, he had one exemplar for *Llyfr Prawf* with its long preface, and subsequently used a different exemplar for the laws of court and country with its own preface. A continuous text, such as BL MS Cotton Titus D.ii (Owen's B) or BL Add. MS 14931 (Owen's E), would not have needed a second preface at the beginning of *Llyfr Prawf*.

Another question is raised by the compressed script of the first part of quire 6 (the beginning of *Llyfr Prawf*). The conventional explanation, which assumes that the manuscript was written in the order we have it, was that the scribe was maintaining the compression of the previous quire.²¹ But if, as is argued here, he wrote quire 6 before quire 5, another explanation must be sought. The answer may arise from consideration of the ruling of the pages. Quires 1–5 are ruled with 26 lines per page, quire 6 with 31, and quires 7–8 with 28. Quire 6 was thus ruled with a much greater number of lines, and it is possible that the scribe was intending to cram *Llyfr Prawf* into one or two quires. If so, he began with a very compressed script but, when he realised that his plan was hopeless, he relaxed the compression. Quires 7–8 look as though they were ruled at the same time. He used quire 7 immediately but quire 8 was not used until later, by which time his orthographical preferences had changed.

The likelihood that this copy of *Llyfr Prawf* was intended as a separate book raises the question of the extent to which sections of lawbooks were copied and used separately. Peniarth 40 (Owen's K) begins with a copy of *Llyfr Prawf* which is followed by *Cyfreithiau Gwlad*;²² in this case it seems that *Llyfr Prawf* was the most important

²¹See Huws, 'The Manuscripts', p. 121. ²²See J. Gwenogvryn Evans, *Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language*, 1, Part 2, Historical Manuscripts Commission (London, 1899), pp. 374–76.