

JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD

JC:P250 18TH CENTURY MANUSCRIPT COPY OF *THE DESCRIPTION OF WALES* (1602) BY GEORGE OWEN OF HENLLYS

George Owen of Henllys (1552-1613), as well as leading a busy life involved in local politics, was also the leading Welsh antiquarian and genealogist of his age. His most significant work was *The Description of Penbrokshire*, written in 1602/3, but not published complete until 1892. More information on his life may be found in his entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

This manuscript copy of a work which is generally titled *The Description of Wales* was given to the College by David Massa (matr. 1954) in March 2021 as Accession No. 662. Mr. Massa had bought it from a private dealer about thirty years previously.

Catalogued in April 2021.

JC:P250/MSI/I

n.d. (early 18th century?)

Manuscript copy of *The Description of Wales*, by George Owen of Henllys (30 fols). It is undated, but the handwriting suggests a date in the first half of the 18th century. The covers are missing, and the manuscript is unsigned, but the text is complete. Owen's work discusses each county of Wales individually. For each county, he provides lists of hundreds, castles, parish churches, towns and ports, mountains, rivers, and religious houses of each county, as well as of the nobility and gentry, who are all listed with their places of residence and wives. There then follow some general (and candid) observations upon each county. Owen dates his work to 1602. Information about other manuscripts of this work may be found in Henry Owen (ed.), *The Description of Penbrokshire by George Owen of Henllys, Lord of Kemes* (London, 1892), pp. xviii-xix.

The major modern edition of *The Description of Wales* is Henry Owen (ed.), *The Description of Penbrokshire by George Owen of Henllys, Lord of Kemes, Part 3* (London, 1906), pp. 287-360, for Monmouthshire, Glamorganshire, Brecknockshire, Radnorshire, and Pembrokeshire, and part 4 (London, 1936), for Carmarthenshire, Cardiganshire, Denbighshire, Flintshire, and Montgomeryshire. This last volume was issued after the death of Henry Owen, and is incomplete, in that he failed to edit the last three sections, on Anglesey, Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire. There is, however, a complete, if not wholly accurate, transcription of the *Description* in the *Gentleman's Magazine* Vol. 93 part 2 (1823), on pp. 16, 108-9, 406-9, 511-14, and 597-600.