

Author's Note

The MA thesis, "British Museum, Additional MS 14905; an Interpretation and Re-examination of the Music and Text" was written between 1970 and 1974. At the time I was unaware of the work done by Robert E. Dowd ("British Museum Additional Manuscript 14905", MA dissertation, New York, 1950) and André Schaefer ("*Le Musica neu Beroriaeth* de Robert ap Huw (ca 1613)" dissertation, Paris, 1973), and of the involvement of Peter Greenhill in the field, which has culminated in his dissertation, "The Robert ap Huw MS; an Exploration of its Possible Solutions" (1993–). Copies of all three of these dissertations are now lodged in the CAWMS archive.

In the present PDF version of my thesis I have kept its content exactly as it was in the 1974 original, but reformatted the text (the original pagination is indicated by red numerals in square brackets) and, for clarity's sake, re-done most of the musical examples and diagrams.

In releasing this version of the work for publication on the internet I feel bound to make the following points about its limitations, as revealed by subsequent research; particularly that of Peter Greenhill.

In Chapter 2, "The Traditional Tunings of Welsh Harp Music", I examined the various early sources of information about *cywair*, and the received wisdom that they refer to scordatura tunings for the diatonic harp. I made clear my dissatisfaction at the various possible tuning solutions based on that assumption, and subsequent findings have shown these misgivings to be justified. I now accept, however, that my eventual conclusion, that the harp should be tuned to the major mode based on the note which forms the 'tonal centre' of the particular piece, was based on my own musical preconceptions, and in nearly every case incorrect. The value of the chapter at the present time may lie in its detailing of the processes by which the tuning solutions based on *cywair* were arrived at, and the impossibility of applying these solutions consistently to the musical text. The conclusions about the tonal and harmonic structures in the music which I detail in my 2007 WMH article "Harmonic Forms in the Robert ap Huw Manuscript" are based on Peter Greenhill's tuning solution of all natural notes apart from B-flat, which he backs up with solid and convincing argument in Part 3, Tuning, of his dissertation.

In Chapter 3, "The Ornaments", unaware that André Schaefer had come to identical conclusions in his 1973 Paris dissertation, I detailed a comprehensive system of fingerings for the striking fingers in the various figurations used in the tablature. These

appear, now, to be generally accepted. However, my conclusion that, with one exception, 'same-finger' damping should be applied has been convincingly invalidated by Peter Greenhill's argument for 'covering-finger' damping in his Part 4, Technique.

Chapter 4, "Metre, Rhythm and Harmony" is a mixed bag. On the one hand, I consider it to have made advances in relating the system of *mesurau* to the metrical structure and the harmonic content of the musical text, and in its analysis of the harmonic system, which I have since consolidated in the above-mentioned WMH article. On the other hand, I deliberately stopped short of any attempt to formulate a coherent system of rhythmic values capable of universal application to the text. The reason for this was my opinion that rhythmical detail was flexible and variable, according to the tastes of the individual performer and the context within the particular piece. I am now firmly of the opinion that the fact that the material in the manuscript was, for most of the period of its currency, aurally transmitted, does not mean that it was subject to an on-going process of mutation and flexibility. In his Part 6, Rhythm, Peter Greenhill establishes, through a process of logical deduction from evidence in the manuscript text, that every note in the manuscript can be allocated a precise duration according to a coherent system.