Chapter 3

The Ornaments

An important element which is unique to the notation of MSS 14905 and 14970 is the complex system of ornamentation, found mostly in the upper part, but also to some extent below the central dividing line of the tablature.

An extremely valuable key to this system was provided by ap Huw on p.35 of B.M. Add. MS 14905 (see Fig. 1). Unfortunately, a few of the ornament signs used in the tablature are omitted from this diagram, but the most important of them are explained clearly enough for a reasonably accurate interpretation of them to be made in transcription.

The ornaments described on p. 35 of the MS fall into three general types: firstly those which indicate the order and manner of performance of vertically aligned clusters of notes in the upper part; secondly a group of tremolo signs which may occur in either the upper or lower part, and thirdly, two signs which apparently indicate the fingering of individual notes.

The ornaments in the first of these groups differ from those to be found in English and continental sources in that all the notes used in each ornament are written out in the alphabetical tablature. The function of the ornament signs is to indicate the order in which the notes are to be played, their fingering, which of them are to be stopped immediately, and which left sounding.

None of the commentators on this MS before Thurston Dart was aware of the second and third of these functions. All of them, apparently, took note of the table on p. 35, but made use of it only to create a melodic line out of otherwise nonsensical clusters of notes. The realisation of this aspect of the ornaments is fairly straightforward. Above clusters of two or three (often adjacent) note-symbols in the upper part, single or double oblique strokes give a clear indication of the order of these notes.
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Robert ap Huw</th>
<th>Lewis Morris</th>
<th>Arnold Dolmetsch¹</th>
<th>James Travis²</th>
<th>Thurston Dart³</th>
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<td>Y plethiad byr (the short plaiting)</td>
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<td>Hanner crafiad (half scrape)</td>
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<td>Plethiad dwbl (double plaiting)</td>
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¹ Arnold Dolmetsch: 'Translations from the Penllyn Manuscript of Ancient Welsh Harp Music' (Llangefni, 1931), pp. 6-1.
² James Travis: 'Miscellanea Musica Celtica' (1968). Since Travis does not give the ornaments in diagramatical form, I have based this list on his treatment of the ornaments in the transcriptions given in his article.
⁴ The first note is damped by the thumb.
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<td>Crychu y fawd (ripple of the thumb)</td>
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5 “To and fro’ movement of the finger. The number of repercussions varies according to circumstances.”
6 Both notes are damped immediately on striking.
7 “Back, front, back, of the nail. Very fast, and continue.”
8 Single note struck with the back of the nail (not damped).
9 “The note is plucked by the 2° finger and instantly damped by the thumb.”
10 Thumb or index finger of the lower hand.
Thus, the first of the ornaments in ap Huw's diagram, tagiad y fawd, consists of two adjacent note-symbols, above which is a single oblique stroke indicating a downward movement (a-g). In the second ornament, y plethiad byr, the stroke points in the opposite direction, indicating the upward movement g-a.

The pre-Dart commentators simply extended this principle to cover the remainder of the ornaments in the first group, as the examples in Fig. 2 will show.

Fig. 2  a) Cainc Dafydd Brophwyd (section 2)

Transcription by John Thomas (op. cit., p. 1211):
These writers were basing their interpretation to a great extent on an attempted explanation of the ornaments in modern notation added by Lewis Morris to the right-hand side of the diagram on p. 35, although its lack of authority is indicated by his note: “These modern notes are only my guesses”.

The interpretations of Lewis Morris are, in turn, based on the ‘explanations’ of the ornaments given by ap Huw using a triangular notation, which appears nowhere else in the MS, but has resemblances to mensural notation, in that all of the triangles have stems, pointing either upwards or downwards, and some of the note-heads are white, like minims, and some black, like semiminims. Unfortunately Lewis Morris decided on a literal transcription of the triangular notes in mensural terms, and thus set the pattern for subsequent commentators, including even Dolmetsch.

Dolmetsch's indebtedness to Morris is clear from the table of interpretations of the ornaments given by the former in his
'Translations', pp. 6-7 (see Fig. 1). Although rhythmically slightly more sophisticated, Dolmetsch's version follows the mensural interpretation of the triangular notes, even to the point of absurdity: ap Huw gives, for the tremolo ysgwyd y bys, the following,

which Dolmetsch transcribes as

[84] Thurston Dart was the first commentator to suggest that the mensural interpretation of ap Huw's triangular notes is incorrect. He notices a certain consistency in the positions of these notes, and considers that the direction in which the stem and the head of the note is pointing may be an indication of the fingering to be employed in the ornament. ¹¹

He then works out a system of fingerings based on this assumption, taking as his starting point the name of the first ornament, tagiad y fawd (the choking of the thumb). Dart follows Dolmetsch in thinking that this name implies that the ornament is played with the thumb and first finger:

Following on from this, by process of elimination, Dart arrives at the following system of fingerings as indicated by the positions of the triangular notes:

- facing left, stem up - thumb
- facing left, stem down - index
- facing right, stem up - middle finger
- facing right, stem down - ring finger

¹¹ Thurston Dart, op. cit., p. 64.
Dart’s diagram of the ornaments\textsuperscript{12} does not use this system of fingering consistently, and frequently interchanges the third and fourth fingers.

In fact many of the fingerings which he arrives at in this way are completely impracticable, to the extent that one must reject the validity of his method as it stands.

It seems to us, however, that Dart is correct in his basic assumption that the positions of the triangular notes indicate the fingerings of the ornaments, and we shall show that it is possible to reconstruct a viable system of fingering on this basis. In order to do this, we must consider a second important discovery made by Thurston Dart, in the same article. This is his suggestion that the black triangular\textsuperscript{85} notes are to be stopped as soon as they are played, while the white notes are to be left sounding.

This possibility is amply confirmed by the fact that in the tablature itself, the notes which would correspond to the white triangular notes of Ap Huw’s diagram are harmony notes, consonant\textsuperscript{13} with the prevailing harmony in the lower part, while those corresponding to the black triangular notes are, in general, dissonant when played together with these harmonies, as we see in Fig. 3.

\[\text{Fig. 3} \quad \text{a) Caniad Cadwgan, cainc 1}\]

\textsuperscript{12} Dart, op. cit., pp. 62-3.
\textsuperscript{13} Possibly the word ‘consistent’ would be more appropriate than ‘consonant’ here, since the harmonic language of the MS is such that harmonies which would be conventionally regarded as dissonant are frequently treated as consonances (see chapter 4).
A further confirmation is the use of the word tagiad (choking) in the names of three of the ornaments: tagiad y fawd, tagiad dwbl (double choking), and tagiad forchog (forked choking). Particularly interesting is the second of these, tagiad dwbl, which has been misinterpreted by earlier commentators who did not realise the significance of the word tagiad. These writers, notably Dolmetsch, were misled by the fact that ap Huw wrote out the ornament twice in the triangular notation, into the belief that the word dwbl meant that the ornament was to be repeated. In fact the word dwbl refers to tagiad, and means that both notes in the ornament are to be stopped immediately, as we see from Dart’s diagram (see Fig. 1).

We may also observe that the number of oblique strokes found in each ornament sign refers to the number of notes which are to be stopped. This fact will be of use to us in our consideration of the rare occurrence of these signs in the tablature in circumstances which do not seem to be accounted for by ap Huw’s diagram on p. 35.
If we now return to a consideration of the fingerings, we find that our understanding of the word *tagiad* may lead us to a less obvious interpretation of *tagiad y fawd*. We may now say that *tagiad y fawd* does not just mean ornament of the *tagiad* type which involves the thumb - thus Dart’s fingering - but an ornament in which the thumb is used to stop a string which has been struck by one of the other fingers.

The key to our new interpretation of the fingering is found in the [87] ornaments *crychu y fawd* (thumb ripple) and *ysgwyd y bys* (finger shake). The first of these is quite obviously a thumb tremolo. Many of its occurrences in the tablature are in connection with notes which could not possibly be played by any other finger (see Fig.4).
Ap Huw writes this ornament out three times in the triangular notation:

\[\text{\includegraphics{ornament.png}}\]

This has again been misinterpreted by Morris, Dolmetsch and Travis to mean that the ornament consists of three notes. In fact each of ap Huw’s three triangular notes is a complete statement of the ornament. The first of these notes is ambiguous in that it consists of a double triangular note pointing both left and right. This is most likely the result of an error on the part of ap Huw. The second and third notes point towards the right. All three have their stems pointing upwards. It is therefore likely that this position of the note indicates the thumb.

For *Ysgwyd y bys* ap Huw gives the remaining three positions of the triangular notes, again with two or three strokes across the stem to indicate a tremolo effect. All commentators apart from Dart have taken these notes to be mensural indications of a three-note ornament, the third note of which rises, since the first two of ap Huw's triangular notes are on a line, and the third on the space above; a fact which is irrelevant to the interpretation of the ornament. Ap Huw is simply indicating by the three notes that the tremolo may be played by any of the three fingers indicated by the note-positions.

Having established that the triangular note which points to the right with the stem upward probably indicates the thumb, and that the remaining three positions refer to the second, third and fourth fingers (like present-day harpists, ap Huw did not use the little finger to strike notes), we turn to the ornament *plethiad y bys bach*.

From the triangular notes for this ornament we see that the uppermost note would be played by the thumb. It would therefore be most practicable for the first and second notes to be played by the third and second fingers respectively. We thus reach the following hypothetical interpretation of the fingerings as indicated by the triangular notes:

- facing right, stem up - thumb.
- facing left, stem up - index.
facing left, stem down - middle finger,

and by a process of elimination:

facing right, stem down - ring finger.

That this interpretation is indeed the most practicable, and
can be applied consistently to all of the ornaments given by ap Huw
in his diagram, we shall show in our analysis of the ornaments in
the first group.

We should first make a few remarks about the rhythmic
interpretation of the ornaments in general. As we have shown,
some of the early commentators were misled by Morris's mensural
interpretation of the triangular notes, and tended to give complex
rhythmic values to the ornamental notes. John Thomas saw the
ornaments as hidden melodic lines, which he articulated in his
transcriptions by using rhythms which are not justified by any
information contained in the MS (see chap. 2, Fig. 1b). It seems
that the ornamental notes (those indicated by black triangular notes
in the diagram) had no fixed value, since in a large proportion of
the pieces in the MS the 'harmony notes' (white triangular notes)
alone create a meaningful melodic line which would be disrupted by
the ornamental notes if these were given rhythmic and melodic
importance, as we see in Fig. 5, taken from Caniad San Silin.

[90] Fig. 5    a) Caniad San Silin, cainc 1

\[\text{Figure 5}\]
b) *Caniad San Silin*, *cainc* 2.

Here, we find a melodic line represented by the ‘harmony notes’, which remains the same from one *cainc* to another, while incidental ornamental notes vary considerably. The best musical solution to the problem of rhythm within the scope of the ornaments, appears to be to make all the ornamental notes of our first group completely free as regards rhythm, but preferably played and stopped as quickly as possible. As we shall see in the chapter about rhythm, only the ‘harmony notes’ have a rhythmical function within the metrical framework of a piece. In notating the ornaments of the first group in transcription, we follow the lead of James Travis\(^{14}\) by using small notes for the ornamental notes themselves, and, in general, normal mensural notes for the ‘harmony notes’;

\[\text{[92]}\text{thus:} \quad \text{[Diagram]} \]

We now proceed to an analysis of the first group of ornaments.

1) *Tagiad y fawd*, according to our hypothesis, would be played with the second and third fingers, the thumb stopping the

\(^{14}\) James Travis, op. cit., pp. 18-24.
first note, allowing the second string to sound on. This is an exception to a general rule which we may infer from the juxtaposition of ornaments in the tablature, that a string is stopped by the finger which has played it. There are instances of the use of tagiad y fawd where it would be easier to stop the string with the second finger (see Fig. 6a), but also others where it would be definitely more convenient to stop it with the thumb (see Fig. 6b).

[92] Fig. 6   a) Caniad y Gwyn Bibydd, cainc 2

a) Caniad Ystafell, cainc 8
ornamental note damped by the second finger, leaving the thumb free for the f string.

2) Y plethiad byr is the inverted form of tagiad y fawd, being an upward acciacatura, played with the third and second fingers (see Fig. 7a). In the absence of any explicit clue to the finger which stops the first note, we assume this to be the third finger. Ap Huw writes this ornament out twice in the triangular notation, the second time apparently making a scribal error in that the triangular notes would indicate that the second finger plays both notes. This seems unlikely in practice. There are, however, some instances where it would be obviously preferable for the second of the notes to be played with the thumb, as in Fig. 7b. Evidently ap Huw's diagram sets out the general rules for the ornaments, which are, where appropriate, subject to some flexibility. It is noteworthy that in instances such as Fig. 7b, the ornament y plethiad byr is followed immediately by tagiad y fawd, the first note of which must then be played with the second finger.
b) *Caniad Cadwgan, diwedd*

3) *Plethiad y pedwarbys* has been misinterpreted by every commentator, including Dart. The source of the difficulty is the fact that this is a double ornament using two signs, the second of which takes the form of a plus sign rather than an oblique stroke, and therefore gives no specific indication of the order in which the two notes which it governs are to be played. Ap Huw's triangular key is also ambiguous on this point: it gives the two lower notes of the double ornament as black triangles, but places them directly beneath their respective white triangular notes:

Arnold Dolmetsch chose to interpret the order and rhythm of the notes as follows:
and this interpretation was adopted in essence by Dart and Travis.

It seems more probable from the use of this ornament in the tablature that its purpose is to provide a special fingering for a double *plethiad byr* (that is, two ascending acciacaturas). From a comparison of the passages in Fig. 8, from ceinciau 10 and 11 of *Caniad Marwnad Ifan ap y Gof*, we can see that the upper notes of this ornament correspond to the important melody notes in cainc 11. If the passage in cainc 11 be transcribed according to the interpretation we are suggesting, thus:

![Musical notation](image)

then the fingering for the first of the note-clusters governed by the plus sign, 4-1, leads on naturally to the fingering of the succeeding ornaments: thus, 4-1, 3-2; and 4-1,2-4. Most of the contexts in which this ornament occurs, such as those given in Fig. 8b and 8c, suggest that this ornament was played extremely rapidly.

[95] Fig. 8  a) *Caniad Marwnad Ifan ap y Gof*, cainc 10
b) Caniad Marwnad Ifan ap y Gof, caninc 11

c) Caniad Bach ar y Go Gywair, caninc 2
4) *Plethiad y bys bach* (the plaiting of the little finger) is a somewhat puzzling name, in that it leads one to expect an analogous situation to *tagiad y fawd*, whereby the little finger would be used to stop one of the notes. From the diagram of ap Huw, and the use of the ornament in the context of the tablature (see Fig. 9), it is clear that the fingering should be 3-2-1, and it is difficult to see any advantage in stopping the first of these notes with the little finger, rather than with the third finger. A confirmation of the fact that the thumb is used to strike the uppermost of the notes is the common addition of the thumb tremolo *crychu y fawd* to this ornament.

Fig. 9  
*Gosteg Ifan ap y Gof, cainc 1*
5) *Crafiad dwbl* is the inversion of the preceding ornament, but has the fingering 2-3-4, rather than 1-2-3, for reasons which can be seen in Fig. 9, where the ornament is marked with a square bracket.

6) *Crafiad sengl* (the single scrape) differs from the preceding ornament in that its sign is a single rather than a double oblique stroke. This means, as ap Huw's triangular notes confirm, that it has only one ornamental note, which precedes two harmony notes which are played together. Its fingering, 3-2/4 is so calculated as to allow for the occasional addition of a third 'harmony note', to be played by the thumb, as in Fig. 10.

[99] Fig. 10  a) *Caniad y Gwyn Bibydd, cainc* 10
b) Caniad Crych ar y Bragod Gywair, cainc 4

[97] 7) Hanner crafiad (half scrape) consists simply of the two lowest notes of crafiad dwbl. Its effect is the same as tagiad y fawd, but the passage in Fig. 11 shows the good reason for its special fingering of 3-4.

[100] Fig. 11 Caniad y Gwyn Bibydd, cainc 5
8) *Tafliad y bys* is not fully explained by the triangular notes of ap Huw. As we have seen, he wrote out several of the ornaments more than once in the triangular notation, a fact which led Dolmetsch, for instance, to believe that these ornaments could be repeated at will, although there is no reason to think that this is the case. The four triangular notes given for *tafliad y bys* do not, however, constitute a simple repetition of the ornament, as, for instance, in the case of *ysgwyd y bys* (see above, p. 87). From the available information, we may put two alternative interpretations on this ornament.

The first depends on the similarity between the horizontal dash through the stem of the third triangular note, and those found in the keys to *crychu y fawd* and *ysgwyd y bys*, which suggests that this note is a short tremolo. In this case, the third and fourth triangular notes could be either a tremolo, or a single plucked note which is left to sound on. The fingering of the ornament, if we interpret the positions of the triangular notes literally, would then be 2-3-2, and the jumping of the second finger from the first string to the string immediately below it would explain the name of the ornament: ‘throwing of the finger’.

The second possible interpretation would point to a slightly less probable correspondence between the above mentioned horizontal dash through the third triangular note and the dash through the head of the note in the key to *cefn ewin* (Back of the nail), which would suggest that the third note of *tafliad y bys* is played with the back of the second finger, and the fourth note with
the front. The ornament would then consist of four very rapidly played notes, to which the name 'throwing of the finger' would be just as applicable.

In our transcriptions we have preferred the first of these interpretations as the more effective in performance. (see Fig. 10b).

9) *Plethiad dwbl* is simply a three-note inverted mordent. The example in Fig. 12 shows the reason for its fingering of 2-3-1.

![Fig. 12 Caniad Hun Wenllian, cainc 3](image1)

10) *Tagiad dwbl*, as we explained on p. 85, is identical to *tagiad y fawd*, except that both its notes are stopped as soon as they are played. The reason for this is presumably that both of the notes are considered as dissonant in the particular harmonic context, although the high tolerance of dissonance in the MS in general and the nature of the passages in which the ornament occurs (see Fig. 13), lead one to wonder why this should be the case.

![Fig. 13 Cwlwm Cydgerdd on Mak y mwn hir, cainc 5](image2)
11) *Tagiad fforchog*, like the preceding ornament, is of comparatively rare occurrence. As its name implies, it is applied to an acciacatura (descending, only) covering an interval greater than a second, and has the fingering 2-4 (see Fig. 8a). Sometimes the ornament *tagiad y fawd* (2-3) is used in its place, as in Fig. 14. The lack of a corresponding ascending ornament is an oversight which is apparently covered by the exceptional form of *y plethiad byr* which uses the fingering 3-1 (see P.91 and Fig. 7b).

In such cases, although ap Huw has used the sign for *tagiad y fawd* (\(\)), the fingering of *tagiad fforchog* (2-4) is probably intended.
12) *Plethiad mawr* is a complementary form to *crafiad sengl*. Here the lowest note is a stopped ornamental note, and the upper two notes should be played together as unstopped harmony notes. Dart, evidently not noticing the correspondance between the two ornaments, suggested that the two upper notes should be played consecutively. The fingering is the same as for *plethiad y bys bach*, which leads one to wonder whether the name of the latter ornament should really have been *plethiad bach* as a reflection of the fact that the upper two notes of *plethiad y bys bach* are adjacent strings, while the corresponding two notes of *plethiad mawr* cover a greater interval (*bach* - small; *mawr* - large). Examples using this ornament are given in fig. 15.

**Fig. 15** a) *Caniad Cadwgan, cainc 12*
b) Caniad Hun Wenllian, cainc 8

*The second half of plethiad y pedwarbys (marked +) may also be combined with y plethiad mawr to create a composite ornament with the fingering: 3-1/2 - 4-1.

[106] The three ornaments in the second group are all tremolos:

1) Plethiad y wanhyllen (the plaiting or the bee) is not explained in the triangular notation by ap Huw. Instead, he associates it with the symbol z, or which more, later. Since no fingering is specified for the ornament, Dolmetsch\textsuperscript{16} assumed that it was a tremolo using the index finger. As we saw on p. 87, however, this is one or the applications of ysgwyd y bys. Comparison with the

\textsuperscript{16} Dolmetsch, op. cit., p. 7.
other ornaments whose names contain the word *plethiad* (plaiting) suggests that this word implies the movement or more than one finger. On the basis of the ways in which this ornament is used in the tablature (see fig. 16), I suggest that *plethiad y wanhynen* consists of a rapid alternation or the index and middle fingers on a single string, creating the buzzing sound appropriate to its name.

[107]

Fig. 16  *Caniad Marwnad Ifan ap y Gof, cainc 1*

See figs. 3, 5a, 6b, 7b, 12, 15b.

For the symbol *z* see fig. 10b.

The symbol *z* occurs in similar contexts to the normal symbol for *plethiad y wanhynen* in the tablature. If we assume that this is intended to signify a variant form of the same ornament, we find that a similar tremolo effect would be appropriate, except that in every case where the symbol *z* is used, the context would demand a rapid alternation of the third and fourth fingers, leaving the first and second fingers free to prepare for a succeeding chord (see fig. 10b).

[108]

2) *Ysgwyd y bys* has already been discussed in some detail on p. 87. The finger with which it is to be played is often dictated quite clearly by the context. As we see in fig. 17, for instance, this ornament often leads up to one of the ornaments from group one, the first note of which is played by the same finger as the tremolo. The previous ornament, *plethiad y wanhynen*, often functions in this way, and the significance of this phenomenon for the interpretation of rhythm and metre will be discussed in chapter 4.
3) *Crychu y fawd* has also been described on p. 87. Whereas the other two tremolos often precede ornaments from group one, *crychu y fawd* is frequently applied to the last note of such an ornament, as in fig. 18a, or to the uppermost note of a chord, as in fig. 18b. Sometimes this is used as the sole distinguishing feature between one *cainc* in a piece and the preceding *cainc*, in which case the second *cainc* may not be written out, since it suffices for ap Huw to write the number of the second *cainc*, and such a direction as 'the twelfth [cainc] is played like the preceding cainc, but ripple [crychu] the upper thumb'.

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17 "... ar deuddegfed a genir fal hithe ond krychu y fawd ucha" (B.M. Add. MS 14905, p.25).
The third group consists of only two ornaments.

1) *Cefn ewin* has presented problems to all previous commentators who have dealt with it, because, again, ap Huw wrote it out three times in the triangular notation. The name means simply ‘back of the nail’, and from the contexts in which it occurs in the MS, it is clear that it corresponds to a single note (not three, or more) struck with the back of the finger (or nail), since it is often used in the tablature in rapid alternation with notes struck with the front of the same finger, as in fig. 19a. Such an interpretation is also feasible in cases where the ornament is used in isolation, as in fig. 19 b.
2) Ysbonk (literally a ‘leap’, or ‘jerk’) is not clearly explained in ap Huw’s diagram. Instead of the usual triangular notation, he gives as his ‘explanation’ of the ornament two black and two white squares with oblique dashes through them. These symbols
apparently [113] correspond to those given in a separate table on the right hand side of p.35, for the thumb and index finger of the lower hand (all the ornaments hitherto discussed except for crychu y fawd are applicable only to the upper hand). Dolmetsch made the error of translating y llaw isa (the lower hand) as ‘the upper hand’, and therefore thought that this ornament indicated the following: “The note is plucked by the 2nd finger [of the upper hand] and instantly damped by the thumb.” This mistranslation was, unfortunately, also accepted by Dart.

The ornament does appear very rarely in the lower part of the tablature (see fig. 20). The square symbols given in the diagram associate it with the thumb and/or index finger of the lower hand, but the significance of the oblique strokes through the symbols is not clear, and the contexts in which the ornaments appear throw no further light on the matter. Possibly Dolmetsch’s idea that the notes are immediately damped is correct, especially if the ornament may be associated with the motif

(see below, p.125). The question of its precise interpretation must remain open until further information comes to light.

[114] Fig. 20

Caniad Hun Wenllian, cainc 1
We shall now deal with a number of ornaments which appear in the tablature, but are not accounted for in ap Huw’s diagram on p. 35 of the MS. Two of these are merely modifications of ornaments which we have already discussed. The first occurs only once, on p. 63 in *Profiad y Botwm* (see fig. 21). It is apparently an application of the principle of *plethiad y pedwarbys* to the ornament *plethiad mawr*, since the signs are identical to those used for the former ornament, while the disposition of the notes is characteristic of *plethiad mawr*. Whereas, as we have seen, the special fingering 2-3, 4-1 found in *plethiad y pedwarbys* is calculated to facilitate the performance of two or more ascending acciacaturas (*plethiad byr*) in succession, the ornament in question is intended to signify the modification of the fingering of the second of three successive ornaments of the *plethiad mawr* type from 3 - 1/2 to 4 - 1/2 - so that the group of three ornaments has the fingering 3 - 1/2, 4 - 1/2, 3 - 1/2. Other similar groups of ornaments, for example in *Caniad Pibau Morfydd*, are not so marked, but there is no reason why this modified fingering should not be applied to these groups also (see fig. 21b).

Fig. 21   a) *Profiad y Botwm*
In the first cainc of Caniad Llywelyn Delynior (fig. 22), the sign for *hanner crafiad* is found above two vertically aligned groups of three notes. From the harmonic context, it is clear that this sign implies a modification of the usual fingering of the ornament *crafiad sengl* from 3 – 2/4 to 3 – 1/4, in order to accommodate unusually large intervals between the two ‘harmony notes’.

Fig. 22  
*Caniad Llywelyn Delynior, cainc 1*
The other unusual ornament signs found in the tablature are not so easily related to ornament-types given in ap Huw’s diagram. The most important, and puzzling of these is the use of single oblique lines to govern single notes in the upper, and, more rarely, the lower parts.

This device is found in a cadential formula (cadential formula ‘a’) which is very common in pieces belonging to the *Caniad Crych* group and is found in two slightly different forms (fig. 23a and b). Crossley-Holland transcribes this formula, as it appears in *Profiad y Botwm*, as if the ornament-signs referred to their usual two-note ornaments, the ornamental notes of which have been for some unknown reason omitted from the tablature (see fig. 23c). There is, however, a great deal of evidence against this interpretation.

![Fig. 23 (cadential formula ‘a’)](image)

\[18\] Crossley-Holland, op. cit., p. 151, no. 2.
b) Caniad Llywelyn ap Ifan ap y Gof, cainc 7 (diwedd)

Comment: Lower d should come after higher d

Transcription by Crossley-Holland of cadential formula ‘a’ in its first form, as it occurs in Profiad y Botwm:

d) Caniad Crych ar y Bragod Gywair, cainc 5
Firstly, a closely related motif occurs in cainc 5 of Caniad Crych ar y Bragod Gymair (see fig. 23d). Here, the first ascending oblique stroke is, in fact governing the two notes c/b, instead of the single note b, which is present in the usual form of the motif. The musical reason for this is that the motif is here functioning as the final cadential step in a melodic sequence, one of the characteristics of which is the initial ascending acciaccatura (plethiad byr). If this two-note cluster, plethiad byr [120] were implied by the first oblique stroke above the note b in the usual form of the motif, there would be no reason for ap Huw to write the ornament out in full in this special case.

Secondly, as we have seen, the usual rule in this notation is that all notes, whether they be ornamental notes or significant harmony notes, are written out in the alphabetical symbols. It seems unlikely that this, and a small number of other related motifs should provide the only exception to this rule.

Thirdly, if we accept Crossley-Holland's interpretation of cadential formula 'a', then we find that the second form in which it occurs (fig. 23b), which has a plus sign instead of the second oblique stroke, would yield the harmony note c instead of b, since we would here have to assume that the ornament plethiad y pedwarbys was being implied.

Oblique strokes are used to govern single notes in the passages quoted in fig. 24, some of which affect the lower part, also. In none of these cases does it seem likely that any other notes are implied than those given in the alphabetical notation. If this is the case, then it is possible that the ornament signs governing single notes are in some way intended to indicate the manner in which the notes are to be performed. We have found in general that the ornament signs indicate the fingering of the notes to which they apply, and which of these notes are to be damped.

We may therefore make a tentative suggestion that the signs are intended to indicate the fingering and/or damping of these notes. The following hypothetical finger-equivalents are, in fact, applicable in practice, as we see from the examples in figs. 23 and 24:

+ = thumb
\(/ = \text{index finger} \\
\backslash = \text{third finger} \\

[121]

Fig. 24  

a) Caniad Hun Wenllian, cainc 3

\[\text{[Musical notation image]}\]

b) Caniad Hun Wenllian, cainc 5

\[\text{[Musical notation image]}\]

[122]
c) Caniad Pibau Morfydd, cainc 1

\[\text{Diagram image}\]

d) Profiad Fforchog, p. 61

\[\text{Diagram image}\]
e) Profiad Brido ar Uwch Gywair, p. 64

f) Caniad Crych ar y Bragod Gywair, cainc 4
The question of whether the notes thus marked are intended to be damped (thus producing a staccato effect) must remain open, except in the case of the sign \ (not to be confused with the *hanner crafaid* sign .\) which, according to the musical contexts in which it occurs, probably indicates that a note plucked by the second finger is damped by the thumb (see fig. 25).

Fig. 25  

a) *Caniad Crych ar y Bragod Gywair, cainc 12*

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b) *Caniad Hun Wenllian, cainc 1*
The figure

(see figs. 10b, 12, 18a, 22, 23d, 24a, 24c), which is very common in the lower part of the tablature in pieces of the *Caniad Crych* group is apparently related to the first group of ornaments which we discussed. Usually the note c. is dissonant to the prevailing harmony, while the note d. is consonant. It therefore seems that the note c is damped as soon as it is plucked, and the d, left to sound. We shall make some further observations regarding the use of this figuration in chapter 4.

The sign is of extremely rare occurrence (see fig. 26), and since it does not appear in ap Huw’s diagram, we can only guess at its meaning. From the harmonic contexts in which it appears, it is clear that basically it follows the pattern of *tagiad y fawd*, which is how it has been interpreted in the transcriptions. It is possible, however, that it represents an elaboration of the simple descending acciacatura, perhaps, like *tafliad y bys*, incorporating a tremolo effect.

[126]

Fig. 26

*Caniad Suwsanna, cainc 1*
The final sign with which we must deal is the most incomprehensible of all - an inverted pause sign: \[ \text{\small\textcircled{C}} \]. The normal fermata sign is occasionally found in those sections of the MS which include rhythm signs above the tablature (see fig. 27a). The inverted form appears not only at the ends of phrases, but may also be applied to several notes within a phrase. If it is related to the fermata sign, it may indicate a short pause, or breathing-space, which seems a feasible interpretation of its use in *Gosteg Dafydd Athro* (fig. 27b) and *Caniad Llywelyn ap Ifan ap y Gof* (fig. 27c).

Fig. 27  a) Caniad Pibau Morfydd, cainc 1

![Diagram of Caniad Pibau Morfydd, cainc 1]

b) Gosteg Dafydd Athro, cainc 1

![Diagram of Gosteg Dafydd Athro, cainc 1]
It is regrettable that ap Huw did not consider it necessary to include a diagrammatical explanation of these more unusual signs. Although most of them occur only very rarely, they do present an obstacle to our complete understanding of the working of the tablature, which will be removed only by the discovery of additional material containing some more explicit indication of their use.
Notes

1 Arnold Dolmetsch: ‘Translations from the Penllyn Manuscript of Ancient Welsh Harp Music’ (Llangefni, 1931), pp. 6-1.

2 James Travis: ‘Miscellanea Musica Celtica’ (1968). Since Travis does not give the ornaments in diagramatical form, I have based this list on his treatment of the ornaments in the transcriptions given in his article.


4 The first note is damped by the thumb.

5 “To and fro’ movement of the finger. The number of repercussions varies according to circumstances.”

6 Both notes are damped immediately on striking.

7 “Back, front, back, of the nail. Very fast, and continue.”

8 Single note struck with the back of the nail (not damped).

9 “The note is plucked by the 2nd finger and instantly damped by the thumb.”

10 Thumb or index finger of the lower hand.

11 Thurston Dart, op. cit., p. 64.


13 Possibly the word ‘consistent’ would be more appropriate than ‘consonant’ here, since the harmonic language of the MS is such that harmonies which would be conventionally regarded as dissonant are frequently treated as consonances (see chapter 4).


15 In such cases, although ap Huw has used the sign for tagiad y fawd (\), the fingering of tagiad fforchog (2-4) is probably intended.

16 Dolmetsch, op. cit., p. 7.

17 “… ar ddeuddegfed a genir fal hithe ond krychu y fawd ucha” (B.M. Add. MS 14905, p.25).

18 Crossley-Holland, op. cit., p. 151, no. 2.