

Ms. A. 9. 2. 17 (4)
Jan. 28th
1827

Sir

I am submitting the enclosed stories to your perusal, I must entreat that you will be guided entirely by your judgement, in the selection you make, should any, or either of them suit your purpose. — I have collected information respecting the various & extraordinary superstitions of this Valley — I am surprised to find so many labouring under a delusion, that seems unexplicable & almost incredible — many of my old friends are respectable in their line — farmers and farmers wives of great vivacity on all other topics, save fairies, witches &c. — they relate their stories with an earnestness, & an appearance of truth, that is confounding — they seem to have heard & seen all that is to be, or can be thought of — I have sent you a story in illustration of each, & all that they believe in of Devonshire, I can say nothing — our cook is a Cornish woman, & she has heard much talk of the fairies. they call them in Cornwall she says "merry dancers" — but farther she

can say nothing - being any matter of fact
I have written out stones of ~~ghost~~ witches,
spirits in the air, & on the earth, of faeries &c
pray omit, or add, any thing you think
proper - You have them from me in
a very rough state, they will require
your embellishing hand to make them
entertaining - I hope you received the
music - I directed it under cover to
you at the Admiralty office -

I have the honour to be Sir

your obedient servant

W. J. Williams -

If there should be any of the welsh part that you
can't decipher I shall be happy to explain

I have sent you the drawings of
the waterfalls ^{which are named in the stories} of Dinas Rock. as perhaps
the scenery will assist your imagination

T. Crofton Croker Esq

The story of David's Shone - relating to the Fairies

P817(2)

"About seventy years ago, two farmer's servants living at - Thorn of Hyson
"I knew them both well - they were returning from their work, one fine evening
"at twilight, & driving their little mountain ponies before them, weary with having
"toiled all day, carrying lime for their Master's use - when they came down into a narrow
"plain, one of the men, named Rhys ap Morgan suddenly halted, "Stop said he to his
"companion called Llewellyn - listen to that enchanting music "that's a tune I have
"danced to, a hundred times - "I cannot resist it now - go, follow the horses, I must find out
"the musicians, & have my dance - if I don't overtake you before you reach home, take the
"ponies off the horses - I'll be with you presently - music in this lonely spot, replied Llewellyn
"What can you be dreaming of? I hear no music, & how should you? - come come, "no, con-
"vince - come home along with me - however this admonition went for naught - for away ran
"Rhys ap Morgan & left his companion to pursue his journey home alone - he arrived there, and
"undressed the little horses, & completed his day's labour, by eating a hearty supper - & was retiring
"to rest, without any anxiety about Rhys, who he supposed in his own mind to have made music a
"pretence to go to the ale-house, which was five miles off - (for said he to himself, how could there be a
"sound of music in that lonely spot, remote from any dwelling -) the next morning when he found
"that Rhys ^{was} still missing, he reluctantly told his master, that he must have assistance, to attend the
"horses, for that Rhys was not yet returned - this alarmed the farmer & his family, for Rhys was a
"very steady fellow, & had never before played the truant, although he was notoriously fond of dance.
"Llewellyn was questioned & cross examined - as to where he had parted from him, & how, & why & so
"all about it - but to no one could he give a satisfactory answer - he said that music had allured
"him, & that he had left him to join the dancers - "did you hear the music said his master?
"or Llewellyn said he had not - whereupon, they resolved that the ale house should be searched
"that he should be sought every where - but it was all to no purpose - no information was coming
"of him - there had been no dance in the whole country round - not a sound of music had met
"the ear - not a trace of the lost servant was to be found - "at length, after a strict search
"fruitless inquiry, suspicion fell on Llewellyn - they supposed, that he must have quarrelled
"with Rhys on the way home, & that he had been ill treated by him, & perhaps, killed - he was
"there accused, & confined upon suspicion; - he vehemently protested his innocence, although he
"could give no clear account of the affair - things remained thus for a year - when a parson in
"the neighbour hood, who had had some experience in fairy customs, shrewdly suspected how the matter stood
" & suggested a plan, that he & several others, should accompany Llewellyn, Walter to the very spot
"at the very same time, where he had parted from Rhys ap Morgan - which they accordingly did
" & when they arrived at this same spot, which was green as the mountain ash, (Gordie) Llewellyn

"Stopped - this is the very spot," I heard I hear music - melodious harp's I heard said he - we all listened
"ed far I was with them - but we heard nothing - put your foot on mine David said Llewellyn - whose
"foot was at that moment upon the outward edge of the fairy circle - I did so - and all the party did the
"same in succession - & we all instantly heard the sound of many harps in full concert. I saw within a
"circle of 20 feet in diameter, countless numbers of little figures the size of children 3, or 4 years old - enjoying
"themselves vastly. they were going round & round & round, the ring joining hands. I did not perceive any
"varied figures in their dance but as they were going round, we saw Rhys ap Iorgans among them - Llewellyn
"seized hold of his smock frock, & twitched him out of the circle. taking great care himself not to touch the
"edge of their ring. for once you are inside it, you lose all power over yourself - & become their property -
"Where are the horses, where are the horses said Rhys impatiently? Where are the horses indeed?
"said Llewellyn, where have you been? come answer for yourself - and account for your absence - &
"clear my character which your ridiculous conduct has cast a suspicion upon - Oh follow the horses
"my good fellow. While I finish my dance, for I have not yet been five minutes dancing. I never enjoyed
"a dance like this. Oh let me return to the dance said Rhys - five minutes said the enraged
"Llewellyn, you must explain the cause of your absence for this whole year. this foolish
"talk of yours about five minutes won't answer the ends of justice, so come you must -
"He took him by main force, but to all our questions, he could say nothing, but that he had
"only been absent from the horses five minutes & that he was dancing very happily - but of the
"people with whom he was, he could give no account whatever - they were strangers to him he said.
"He answered no questions as to what he had eaten, or where he had slept, or who had clothed him
"for he was in the same dress as when he disappeared - & he seemed in a very desponding way -
"seemed sad & silent - & soon took to his bed, where he died - and continued the
"narrator of the above, the morning after we had found Rhys we went to examine the scene of this
"extraordinary adventure & the edge of the ring was quite red as if quite trodden down, and I
"could see the marks of little heels, the size of my thumb nails (he repeatedly compared the size of
"their heels to his thumb nail -

Story of money given by the fairies to Davidd Thomas' Mother -

"My Mother once upon a time was in the habit of receiving money from the fairies - and
"near our house there was a well - & near it a green spot celebrated for being the scene of many fairy
"exploits. Whenever my Mother went to the well, she would find upon the stone above the water
"spout, a half guinea - once I was bargaining about a pig, and my Mother to prevent further
"contention, brought her little bag of gold forward & gave me a half guinea - I was frightened when
"I saw a poor woman like my Mother, possessed of so much money - & I entreated she would tell me
"how she came by it - honestly said she - Oh Mother tell me where you got it - to whom will you
"disclose the secret if you don't confide in your only son - well if I must I must - said my Mother
"She then told me - & most unfortunate poor woman for her was the disclosure - for
"from that moment the donation ceased - often did she attend the well, but alas, in vain - not a
"farthing did she find from that time - {an old woman in this neigh-
"bourhood about me that her Father often saw the fairies on horseback in the green air - but that
"he never saw them descend - that he heard the music in the air - & that she heard of a man who had
"been 25 years with the fairies & that when he returned he thought he had only been five minutes away &
"that those who ^{have} once been with the fairies, never looked like other people - & that her own son when
"a baby, looked so sadly, that her neighbours all thought & used to tell her that he was exchanged by the
"fairies -

The following story of the fairies was related to me by Davidd Thomas Bowen -

"My Mother lived in the immediate neighbourhood of a farm house, that was positively infes-
"ted with fairies - it was one of those old fashioned houses in the hills, constructed after the manner
"of ancient days. when farmers considered the safety & comfort of their cattle as much as that of their
"children & domestics - & the kitchen & cow house were on the same floor adjoining each other with
"a half door ^{over} which the good man could see the animals from his own chimney corner without moving
"My Mother & the farmer's wife were intimate friends - & she used often to complain to her that the
"fairies annoyed her, & her family to that degree that they had no peace - that whenever the family dined
"or supped, or ate any meal, or were sitting quietly together, these mischievous little beings would assemble
"in the next apartment - for instance when they were sitting in the kitchen, they were at high gambols
"in the dairy - or when they were yoking the cows, they would see the fairies in the kitchen, &
"dancing, & laughing, & provokingly merry - & one day, there were numbers of reapers, partaking of
"a harvest dinner, prepared with great care & nice ty by the housewife, when they were all seated
"round the table, they heard music, & dancing & laughing above - & a shower of dust fell upon the table
" & completely spoiled the repast. the pudding in particular was enveloped in dust, & the whole
"party were disconcerted - & their keen appetites were disappointed - just at this moment of trouble
" & despair, an old woman entered. saw the confusion & heard the whole affair explained - well said she
"I'll tell you how to get rid of the fairies - tomorrow, prepare a dinner for four reapers & put it in an
"egg shell to boil on the fire - you may think it a scanty meal, but it will be quite sufficient, to expel
"the fairies & you won't be troubled with them any more - this was accordingly done & when
"they were boiling the pudding in the egg shell, they heard a great noise in the next apartment
" & an angry voice calling out, "I have lived long in this world - I was born just after the earth was
"made, but before the acorn was planted - & yet I never saw until now, a harvest dinner prepared
"in an egg shell." & from that time, the music, & dancing ceased - & the fairies never appeared there
"any more -

Davidd Thomas Bowen also knew a farmer who was much annoyed by the fairies. they frequented
"the brook that ran by his house, & so mischievous were they, that their great amusement was to
"take the clay from the bottom of the brook, & make little round balls the size of marbles, with which
"they played - but that he never could discover what game it was. the water used to be so muddy in
"consequence of this, that the cattle could not drink of the stream & when he would utter some
"complaint against them for this, they would always echo his expressions in derision, & laugh & jibe
"away - & that a girl in the neighbourhood used to assist them in making these little clay balls, for
"which she received quantities of money -

The last time the fairies were seen among these hills, was about ten years ago -
"by Morgan Rhys Harris, an old man who related the following account of it to his landlord a
"very respectable farmer who lives about 7 miles from hence & who now repeated it to me exactly as it was
"told him - & he says that the old man told it, with such an appearance of truth, & that he was always so correct
"in every thing he said, that he does not doubt the truth of his narration -

"Morgan Rhys Harris, rented two farms. the one, he lived at & the other he held in hand & farmed himself -
"in old times the farmers had kilns close by their houses to bake their oats & barley &c - and the house now in
"question had this appendage - Morgan Rhys Harris was going down a hill which led to the farm, when he heard
"the most delightful music - he stopped - & still heard this music - he advanced - & he heard it plainer still -
"at a little distance before him & in the direct path which he had to cross, & near the kiln, he saw numberless little
"beings all dancing - various were the figures, & changes of the dance. some advancing others retreating, & others as
"if they were dancing reels - the old man paused - & hesitated whether he should return or what course he should
"pursue. he feared to pass them lest he should put his foot on fairy ground, & lose possession of himself. so he
"made a circuit, & reached the barn, near the kiln, & sheltered himself inside the door & from this place he
"watched their movements for an hour - he distinctly saw them, & he learnt the tune which they played -
" & would have taught it me if I had had an ear for music - & this old man only died 2 years ago - I wish
"you had seen him - for he really was one who spoke the truth, & you might have relied on every word
"he said -

Story of the witch - as told by Shone Tomas Shone

The neighbourhood of Pontneathorugh was infested by witches in my younger days - and so daring were they that they would bewitch the cattle day & night. There were no less than twelve notorious witches in one small parish. In fact, goblins, witches, fairies &c. were as numerous as mice. So in that secluded district, than the human inhabitants - among the number of those malignant beings there was one woman named Gwladys Hwel Shams. She was well known as a most malicious and mischievous witch. She came one day to the house of a man named Meredydd Whips of Tomas, and asked him for a bundle of straw. But Meredydd had an aversion to witches & especially to Gwladys & refused it - and sent her away. She had not long been gone, when the whole household had cause to lament her displeasure. For the greatest confusion prevailed among them in the first place, the good housewife had no luck in making her pancakes, although the most expert hand at toasting them in the whole country round - every pancake fell into the fire. until her patience was exhausted. The cream turned sour in the dairy & the poor dairy maid tried for in vain for three days to make butter. & poor Meredydd saw his cattle lying on their backs in the farm yard, with their hoofs turned toward the sky. For several days they remained immovable in this position till the ground was worn bare under them. When this was known in the country, all the neighbourhood came & endeavored to assist them in recovering the cattle. & I among the number. but all our efforts were in vain - but Deio Hwellyn more versed in this kind of knowledge than the rest, said it was the effect of witchcraft & that if search was made, some witch's butter would be found somewhere about the house. they found it over the door a quantity of stuff resembling butter - which by Deio's directions we took, and having collected nine thorn prickles, we stuck them in the witch's butter in such a way that every one of them should cross all the others. after we had spent some time in so doing, we placed it upon the fire & kept watch while it was frying. there were 15, or 16 of us present. When the butter had been some time on the fire, we all saw a large hare entering the kitchen & she sat down before the fire & scratched her ear with her foot. upon which Deio Hwellyn said, that is the witch. "I strike it and if you can but draw her blood, the witchcraft will cease for ever about these premises. we all attacked the hare - one struck her. & the other struck her. but none of us could catch her. for she escaped at the door. but we had drawn her blood & upon tracing it, we found that it led to the house of Gwladys Hwel Shams. & that she had that very morning taken to her bed very much bruised & beaten. She acknowledged that the burning of the butter with the thorns in it, was to her, like fire upon her skin & she could not remain easy without coming to the house, where it was frying. she consented to unwitch the cattle. & accompanied us for that purpose. she accomplished this by drawing her hand over them against the hair & the animals instantly turned on their sides - she then drew her hand a second time against the hair along the ridge of their backs & they all stood on their legs quite well. *

* note -

The people here at this day, fancy that witches assume the form of hares, and even now they say there is an old woman who lives at Derlwyn Manor, who has been haunted often by a farmer in this neighbourhood - the dog always bays when she gets to Derlwyn Manor, her residence. & so persuaded are they that the blood of a witch is a specific against witchcraft, that a farmer near this place not long ago, actually followed this old woman through his farm yard with a pin to prick her.

Gwladys Hwel Shams told me that he was once courting the grand daughter of a celebrated witch - but without knowing her descent - and as soon as he found it out, he left her. Many anecdotes were told of the grandmother. Now she would bewitch the cattle & annoy those who offended her. A young man who paid his addresses to his daughter - had cause to lament the day he first saw her - for as he was going one evening to her house, he felt something scratch her back - he turned round to see what it was, he saw a large hare - as large as a dog - & then he spoke away she ran. "ho. ho. said he I see how things are here - I shall decamp - but before he arrived at home, the crooked path again in the form of a goat - & was sitting down on a seat of ashes, which the goat herself had plaited. as he passed - he heard a loud laugh - which so provoked him, that he took up a stone to throw at her, & his arm was contracted & stiffened in that form - it became straight, but was useless ever after - as he never could find an opportunity to draw blood from her in any form she assumed -

The story of the headless lady -

The favourite haunt of the headless lady, is Llyn Rhyd y Rhos, where she wanders every other sixty years. being absent for sixty years, & then presenting her frightful form to the terror of the whole district. & revisiting her favourite solitude in the dusk of the evening. ^{her} for appearing - Llyn Rhyd y Rhos is a dark & gloomy dingle - a bridge crosses the dark ravine which is overhung with trees & the murmuring streamlet is the only noise that meets the ear, save the rustling of the breeze among the leaves. In this lonely dell, the white lady without a head appears - many stories of this appalling spectre are related by the common people here. some say the most death like chill seeps their blood at her appearance - although she never molests any one but tranquilly wanders along. that their very clothes seem to freeze around them & are stiff, that they have not the power of utterance &c. - but I shall give the following story as told by the parties concerned.

About ten years ago, as Mary Lewis was going through Llyn Pergwm on her way to Blaenpergwm farm, near the bridge called Pont Rhyd y Rhos, there appeared before her a white figure - which although it seemed to approach her, never came the nearer - retreat was impossible, for every retrograde step she took, the headless figure kept pace with her. so she determined on proceeding - the lady preceded her - & always seemed to be two paces in advance of her & kept in full view of poor Mary - this disgusting sight was about five feet high, a perfect female form without a head - wearing a snow white dress, with a mantle of dazzling white falling over her shoulders in vandyke points - the figure made no sign or motion to Mary, but accompanied her within six paces of the farm house, & then vanished as soon as the poor girl gained the threshold she fainted away, every time she revived, & endeavored to describe the spectre the very recollection of her terrified her into fits & hysterics. she remained in this state for two days & looked more dead than alive. the good woman of the house thought she was actually dead - & sent for her relatives who brought a beer to take her home - a procession followed the beer to Mary's house - where they were going to lay her out, when she showed symptoms of life & by slow degrees recovered to tell the above story - * note.

* The above tale is a not a fiction as far as relates to the girl in question - her having been alarmed & related the whole story - & she is called to this day Mary's Elor - (Elor is the Welsh for Beer)

Suppose this dismal glass being reported to be the shade of a Venetian Ven, who in her having to pass this way in the dark by herself, her frightened imagination conjured up the spectre -

Interrogated Davidd Shone respecting the various signs he had witnessed preceding death he seems to be quite experienced & well acquainted with every description of them & has heard & seen more than most people - he has heard Ghrath. (groans). & heard the "Cion Annon" (little dogs that howl in the air a sort of lamentation - one of them he says fell upon a tomb stone in a church once, but no one ever found him - he has heard a little bird called "aderin y corff" it chirps at the door of the person who is to die, & makes a noise that resembles in Welsh the word "come come" - whoever is thus called must attend the summons - & there is an appearance called a "llefwith" - this does not always denote death, as there are many now alive whose "llefwith" has been seen by numbers in this valley, when they are at a great distance from hence, & are at this moment ignorant of their persons having been plainly seen here - this vision never speaks but vanishes when spoken to - but the most distinct & visible sign Davidd ever had, was that of a corpse candle - (Ganall Foff) this light denotes the death of the person who carries it, and varies in the strength of the light, according to the sex of the victim - the female's candle being a pale & delicate blue light - this is seen all over Wales - the following story was related to me by Davidd

Story of Pally Shone Rhys Shone -

"I lived as a servant in a farm house in Gttradfellta where a young woman named Pally Shone Rhys Shone was in the habit of coming to sew. She was employed in the neighbourhood as a sempstress. well it happened that I was coming home one night with William Watkin another fellow servant. & we perceived a light coming to meet us, which we soon discovered to be a corpse candle. I cautioned my companion not to stand in its way. (knowing the danger of such terrors) but said I follow my instructions - station yourself here with me - & we placed ourselves upon a ridge over a brook through which the road passed & we lay down & turned our faces towards the water & there we clearly saw the reflection of Pally Shone Rhys Shone bearing the corpse candle upon the ring finger of her right hand & the other hand over the blue light as if to protect it from the wind. we remained motionless in this position until the reflection vanished & then we walked home sad & sorrowful. although we could believe that it was Pally - for what should she do in that church yard - that was not at her burying place - but however sad thoughts we had the we said nothing on our return - though repeatedly questioned why we looked so mournful - in a week after, we heard that poor Pally had been suddenly taken off, & her corpse popped that way road, to be buried in that same church yard -"

* The Welsh are superstitious, in each preserving the burial place of their family. they adhere to the spot where their forefathers were laid, with an extraordinary tenacity - a labourer will request to be buried to the grave of his ancestors, tho' he should die 20 or 30 miles off - Every Easter, Whitsuntide & Christmas the relations of the departed are busy white washing the head & foot stones, & planting flowers on the graves. & listening at the church door in the dark. when they sometimes fancy they hear the names called out in Church, of those who are destined to follow -

R a Story of Enchantment told me by Thomas ap Rhys
In one of the most secluded parts of the Principality may be seen the ruins of an ancient Castle called "Castell Owen Lawgoch" from the name of a chieftain - Owen Lawgoch, or Owen Castle of the red hand. by whom it was once occupied & who is believed to be at this moment together with all his warriors in a state of Enchanted Sleep in the vaults under the Castle - In confirmation of this belief the following fact is related as having occurred not many years ago -

"It happened that as a Welshman was one day venturing among the ruins, he discovered an opening which seemed to lead to some subterraneous passage. & having removed the obstructions caused by the ivy & rubbish about the entrance, he managed to creep in, & to his surprise found that this passage led to others of considerable length & which curiosity induced him to explore. until he came suddenly to a vaulted hall of vast extent. & in which he saw an immense multitude of warriors clad in armour, lying upon their arms fast asleep. this unexpected sight it may be supposed checked his curiosity in some degree & suggested an idea to him that he had proceeded quite far enough - he therefore hastened to return before his intrusion should be discovered - but as he turned himself round rather incautiously to depart, he unfortunately struck against something which in the dim light of this vault or cavern, he had not perceived, but which seemed to consist of arms piled up together, & they fell down with a tremendous clang - upon which all the warriors started up from their sleep & grasping their arms exclaimed, "a ydyw hi'n dydd? a ydyw hi'n dydd? is it day? is it day? but the intruder with the most admirable presence of mind, answered naegys naegys. cws goch. etc. - no - no - sleep again. when they all immediately lay themselves down, & fell fast asleep as before. when they still were waiting the signal which is to awaken them -"

Another legend says, that in a cavern under a hill there are a thousand warriors with their chieftain Owen Lawgoch, in a state of enchanted sleep & the time will arrive when they are to be awakened in order to oppose a hostile army & shall meet at the ford of Rhys goch & addyffrych & at Slyn fant y Wryd - & the destinies of Britain depend upon the valour & success of the awakened warriors. this hill is said to be the scene of a very extraordinary illusion - concerning which an old man of the neighbourhood related the following story -

"Whoever stands at the distance of a mile or two from the hill may perceive upon its summit a fine large yew tree - but should you attempt to approach the spot, you will find that the yew tree has vanished - if you retreat again to a short distance from the spot, you will plainly see the yew tree as before - it happened that a Shepherd lad being one day driving his flock upon this hill, wanted a walking stick - he perceived a hazle tree near him which he cut for that purpose - in a short time afterwards he became tired of his pastoral employment, & resolved upon leaving home, & seeking fortune somewhere else & in another way - when he was upon his journey, he met a stranger of noble appearance, who seemed to be very attentively gazing upon him - & upon the hazle stick which he had in his hand - at length he addressed him in the most intimating manner. & said, "young man where did you get that stick? can you show me the very spot? I can replied the Welsh boy - I will you said the stranger? most readily would I, if I were near it." the stranger intreated the boy to accompany him, & that he would be at the expense of the journey - they accordingly set off together, & arrived at the very foot of the tree - the boy here stopped, & said, "here is the root of the hazle stick which attracted your attention - his companion then desired him to look under it & that he would there see a trap door which would admit him into a passage which led to an apartment in which numbers of armed warriors lay asleep & that at its entrance he should find a rope, conducting him to it." but said he, "prays gently on the rope, for it is attached to a bell - which if touched would awaken the warriors, & the chieftain will say as it day, but mind and answer quickly no - in this apartment there is a vast quantity of gold concealed under a pile of arms, bring it away with you - be cautious, & follow implicitly my directions" - the lad obeyed - & arrived at the very apartment desired. by his companion, & there he saw the warriors lying on their arms, & asleep & near the chieftain was the pile of arms - which concealed the heap of gold - the intrepid Welshman approached to fetch it, down fell the arms & up started Owen Lawgoch, & stretched out his hand as large as a shield, & cried out with a voice that echoed through the vaulted roof, "a ydyw hi'n dydd? a ydyw hi'n dydd? is it day, is it day? whereupon all the armed men were aroused - & he iterated the same question - the Welshman with great coolness replied, "naegys naegys. cws goch. etc." - no - no - sleep again - when they all composed themselves to sleep again - the lad returned to the entrance of the cavern, & delivered as much gold as he could carry to the stranger who desired him to descend and bring up the remainder, & while thus employed, he was decamped -

"Leaving the wellman in darkness & despair - for upon this second attempt, he found neither cove, or bed - or warriors, or treasure - & after much toil & fear, he found his way back to the trap door - but his companion had fled for ever - never seen or heard of in the neighbourhood - the cavern, like the quiver, has ever since been in a state of Dygel (invisibility) as before -

There are many stories of concealed treasure - and those who have dealings with the evil one, are instructed by him where to discover it - but like the poor shepherd lad, his followers are always defeated at last - I remember a meeting of twenty preachers, assembled on a hill near this place (where there is a Roman causeway & near this causeway, it is said bars of gold have been found) to quell this evil spirit, who enticed so many to evil practices, by shewing them the very spot, where treasure was concealed - a farmer, a tenant of one who became suddenly rich, was supposed by the common people here to have sold himself to the evil spirit - this Roman causeway is called Sarn Helen.

As to the tales of Spectres, the following will afford a specimen -

In the county of Brecon there is a lofty range of mountains called in Welsh Bannau Brechein - or in English the Brecon Beacons - forming part of that chain which runs through the greatest part of South Wales - & is generally known by the name of the Black Mountains, of which the principal peak Pen-y-fan is considered the highest of the range - being near 3000 feet in height & which with its attendant points when seen from the north of the Town of Brecon, forms one of the most elegant groups of mountains in the Kingdom - immediately at the foot of the precipice of Pen-y-fan & almost surrounded by very lofty rocks is an extraordinary water shaped pool called Llyn Cwm-Bluch about 200, yards wide & of unknown depth concerning which many superstitious tales are repeated by the country people, and it certainly must be allowed that it would be difficult to find a spot better calculated to produce superstitious impressions, being far removed from any habitation & even far out of sight of any cultivated land & over hanging by rugged & growing precipices, often rendered peculiarly striking by the clouds & mist curling down their sides & by the croak of the raven which may often be seen sailing among the crags. Among the various stories related of this pool, the following seems the most generally known & is related now by me exactly as told me by an old man who resided in its neighbour hood.

The Story of Llyn Cwm-Bluch -

Several years ago - for some cause or other, the inhabitants of the neighbour hood formed a plan of draining Llyn Cwm-Bluch - for what purpose is not now known whether from curiosity to see what was at the bottom of it - or with an idea of finding some treasure there - however having formed this resolution they assembled there one day in considerable numbers with spades & pick axes, & commenced their operations with such vigour that in a few hours they dug a trench thirty yards in depth - the remains of which may still be seen having worked very hard for several hours, they at last approached so near the water of the pool, that it seemed as if another blow of the pick axe would complete the undertaking & break through the remainder of the bank & let out the contents of the pool - but just as this was going to be put into execution as the tools were lifted up for the finishing stroke - a flash of lightning was seen which arrested their arms - the sky became black - a loud peal of thunder rolled among the mountains, & all the workmen ran from the trench & stood astonished on the brink of the pool - as the sound of the thunder died away, a sort of ripple was perceived on the face of the water - which increased to a great degree in the centre of the pool from which was seen to arise a figure of gigantic stature - his hair & beard

was three yards long - having arisen nearly half out of the water, he addressed the workmen & told them to desist from their purpose or else they would drown the Town of Brecon & all the country of the Vale of Usk - & concluded by saying Cofiwch arwydd y gath - Remember the token of the cat - he then disappeared in the water amidst thunder & lightning - & a most tremendous storm - when the astonishment had a little subsided the people began to discuss the matter together, & would perfectly comprehend the warning all but his concluding sentence - I being much perplexed about it, an old man came forward - Thomas Thorne, Whithurch an ancestor of the relater of this tale & he said that he could explain the meaning of the words - & he accordingly told them that when he was a boy he had heard a tradition that a woman who lived in a cottage among the Van Mountains, had a cat which was very troublesome - & she determined upon destroying it - and for that purpose her son a lad who followed the occupation of a shepherd upon those hills, took the cat with him in order to drown it in Llyn Cwm-Bluch - & having arrived there he took off his garter, & with it, he tied a large stone to the cat's neck - & then threw her into the pool - & she of course sunk immediately out of sight - the sides of the pool being very precipitous - Shortly after there was seen a cat precisely of this same description & in a fishing boat upon the Lake of Llyn Sa-fad-dan ten miles off - & having a garter about her neck precisely of the same make with the one which the lad had thrown into Llyn Cwm-Bluch - therefore it is concluded that there is a connexion between this pool & the large lake of Llyn Sa-fad-dan - & though the pool is but small, yet if attempted to be drained, the Lake of Llyn Sa-fad-dan would avenge its little relative & avenge this injury by discharging its vast body of water over the whole of the adjacent country -