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Introduction

Modern Welsh writing in English, the received cultural narrative runs, discovered its precursor in Caradoc Evans, and its founding text in *My People* (1915) – his extraordinary first collection of ‘stories of the Welsh peasantry’.¹ The fundamentals of that narrative – especially Evans’s status as parent to a national literature – have repeatedly been disputed;² nonetheless, the orthodoxy has proved to be remarkably resilient. One of the few Welsh authors writing in English to have achieved fame in the first three decades of the twentieth century, Evans was looked up to by anglophone Welsh writers starting literary careers between the wars – Glyn Jones and Dylan Thomas prominent among them. In that specific sense, Evans was an enabling father figure, a man whose success was an encouraging precedent for a younger generation. As a template for writing Wales in English, however, Evans’s work left much to be desired. Rooted predominantly in the Cardiganshire of his boyhood, his mediations of Wales were anachronistic; they were also very narrow in their field of vision, having little to say about or to the industrialised communities of the coal mining valleys. More significantly, Evans’s delineations of a rural landscape populated by brutish, immoral peasants in thrall to a debased Welsh Nonconformity had a negative impact on perceptions of the Welsh and their culture.

The ‘canonisation’ of Idris Davies (1905-1953) was, I suggest, partly a reaction to Evans’s prolonged, baleful influence on the cultural landscape of his

¹ Quoted from the jacket of the first edition, published by Andrew Melrose. The jacket is reproduced in *My People*, ed. and introduced by John Harris (Bridgend: Seren, 1987 (rpr. 1997)), p. 34.

² M. Wynn Thomas has proposed the dramatist J.O. Francis as an alternative founding figure of modern Welsh Writing in English. See *Internal Difference: Literature in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992).

native country. For an Anglo-Welsh intelligentsia forging the concept of a Welsh literature written in English, the appearance of *Gwalia Deserta* in 1938 seemed to offer a corrective to the skewed vision of *My People*: here, it seemed to them, was an authentic chronicler of industrial experience, and one who spoke with simplicity and directness – a far cry from the distorted idiom of Caradoc’s Cardiganshire peasantry. And here too, the intelligentsia declared, was a poetry that engaged with the contemporary realities of life in the south Wales valleys, unlike the archaic Wordsworthian musings of Huw Menai. Last but not least, Davies’s poem was welcomed (erroneously, as this thesis will show) as the work of an individual who wrote from within the communities he described. In short, Davies fulfilled a cultural and psychological need in the late 1930s – a need for an authentic, emplaced industrial voice in the embryonic creative discipline and critical-cultural category known then as ‘Anglo-Welsh’ literature. His work and personality were quickly woven into a ‘necessary’ fiction, so that the Rhymney-born miner-turned-primary school teacher became ‘the archetypal poet of the Welsh valleys’.³

For later generations of poets and literary critics, this simple, authentic, emplaced Idris Davies has himself acquired the significance of a cultural father. In 1995, Tony Conran asserted his centrality to the ‘Anglo-Welsh’ poetic tradition; indeed, for this renowned poet, translator and critic, Davies was ‘more crucial [...] than Dylan Thomas or even R.S. himself’.⁴ Writing a decade later in *Poetry Wales*, Nigel Jenkins averred that Wales’s literary history would have been very

³ Quoted from the back cover of *The Collected Poems of Idris Davies*, ed. by Islwyn Jenkins with an Introduction by R. George Thomas (Llandysul: Gomerian Press, 1972).

⁴ Tony Conran, ‘Welsh studies “come of age”’ (Review of *The Complete Poems of Idris Davies* (1994)), *New Welsh Review*, 8, No. 2 [30] (Autumn 1995), 9-12 (p. 9).

different had Davies not existed: ‘without his shade’s numinous presence in the hills around Merthyr’, Jenkins suggests, ‘it is possible that this magazine [*Poetry Wales*] would not have been founded, and it is probable that without his “permission” some of the liveliest and most engaging writers of *Poetry Wales*’s early years would not have come to fruition’.⁵ Very recently, *Slanderous Tongues* (2010) – a collection of essays examining aspects of Welsh poetry in English composed between 1970 and 2005 – has reaffirmed Davies’s status as a central cultural figure. Its editor, Daniel G. Williams, locates him at the head of that particular phase of literary production:

Just as Alice Walker’s rediscovery of the work of the thirties novelist Zora Neale Hurston formed a basis for the (re)creation of a dynamic African American feminist literature from the 1970s onwards, Tony Conran’s revisionist account of the Rhymney poet whose work had been widely dismissed as naïve and simplistic, can be seen, retrospectively, to play a similarly foundational role for contemporary Welsh poetry. This is not a question of ‘influence’, but rather a sense that many of the key thematic and formal characteristics of contemporary Welsh poetry can, for good or ill, be traced back to the writings of Idris Davies.⁶

As has been the case with Idris Davies, the life and works of Alun Lewis (1915-1944) have likewise been subsumed into (and occluded by) the distorting fictions of wider cultural narratives. However, Lewis did not fill a void in anglophone Welsh culture in the way that the poet of *Gwalia Deserta* did. In contradistinction to his contemporary – and as Carrie Jadud observes – ‘[t]he particular circumstances of his life and philosophy ensured that comparatively little of Lewis’s published work engages with Wales or with Welsh characters in

⁵ Nigel Jenkins, ““O What Can You Give Me?””, *Poetry Wales*, 40, No. 4 (Spring 2005), 48-52 (pp. 48-49).

⁶ Daniel G. Williams, Introduction to *Slanderous Tongues: Essays on Welsh Poetry in English 1970-2005*, ed. by Daniel G. Williams (Bridgend: Seren, 2010), pp. 7-18 (pp. 11-12).

their home communities'.⁷ His cultural eminence, I suggest, had less to do with his vision of Wales than with his function as a writer who satisfied the craving for a 'war poet' during the 1939-45 conflict. In Welsh and English cultural contexts, he possessed symbolic value as a 1940s equivalent of the mythologized Rupert Brooke; he was regarded, that is to say, as an authentic literary spokesman for the British soldier, and an embodiment of the 'noble' qualities of such men – patriotism, courage and self-sacrifice. Formed in the wake of publication of his poem, 'All Day It Has Rained...' – a cultural event I discuss in Chapter 2 – this conception of Lewis rapidly hardened into the orthodox view once news broke of his death on the edge of action in Burma. Lamented in the mid-1940s as an irreplaceable loss to Welsh letters, Lewis's passing was regretted by the Anglo-Welsh intelligentsia for decades afterwards; indeed, critical essays from the 1970s and 1980s suggest a yearning for a great poetic figure of his stature. For Harri Webb in 1975, Lewis was a 'lost leader'⁸ of Welsh Writing in English – someone whose involvement and concern with industrialised communities like his native Cwmaman would have made him 'a wonderful man to have had around in those shameful sodden decades that followed the war'.⁹ Dai Smith, too, evokes the post-war clamour in literary Wales for a figure like Lewis:

[H]e was almost physically craved for in post-war Wales by an infant tradition (Welsh writing in English) that lacked the profundity of intelligence and tempered skill which, in him, might have defined a surer identity.¹⁰

⁷ Carrie Anne Jadud, "'The Fragile Universe of Self': The Other and Identity in the Writing of Alun Lewis' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Wales [Bangor], 2007), p. 9.

⁸ Harri Webb, 'Alun Lewis: The Lost Leader', *Poetry Wales*, 10, No. 3 (1975), 118-23 (p. 123).

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Dai (David) Smith, 'The Case of Alun Lewis: A Divided Sensibility', *Llafur: The Journal of the Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History*, 3, No. 2 (1981), 14-27 (p. 16).

This thesis unpicks and explodes the ‘necessary’ fictions outlined above. It traces the origins of those limiting, essentialising orthodoxies, and foregrounds the more complex, conflicted realities they conceal. In the chapters that follow, the Idris Davies and Alun Lewis of popular folklore are radically defamiliarised; they are placed in new and challenging conceptual frames and cultural contexts, and relocated to some surprising geographical settings. Both writers, I suggest, need to be defamiliarised – removed from the zone of safety and comforting orthodoxy that most studies of these writers have tended to occupy.

The thesis comprises six main chapters arranged in two discrete sections, followed by a short Afterword. The bipartite superstructure complements a stratified approach to issues of cultural identity, which form the bedrock of the defamiliarising project of this thesis. Part One – Chapters 1 and 2 – adopts a meta-textual standpoint: it traces the origins of normative critical paradigms now attached to the work of Lewis and Davies, discussing them in relation to the profiles each writer has acquired in the field of cultural production. Part Two, on the other hand, focuses exclusively on the writing itself, privileging the subtle modes and inscriptions of identity in their literary works.

The thematic foci and interrelationship of individual chapters are likewise conceptually determined. In conformity with the comparative rationale of this thesis (on which more shortly), the six chapters are arranged in pairs, with the focus alternating between Davies and Lewis. Critical discussion within and between the paired chapters is grounded in each instance in overarching themes – these being the formation and development of critical/cultural profiles; the writers’ mediations of Wales; and their representations of wartime experience.

Cultural identity is a diffuse conceptual category, especially in its fluid postmodern formulation, encompassing a broad spectrum of class, gender, ethnic, religious, political and national affiliations. Use of broad, unifying thematic categories facilitates discussion of relations between these overlapping (and often contradictory) modalities of affiliation, militating against potentially reductive compartmentalisation.

As befits a project of this scale and scope, the source material encompasses a range of media and genres. In respect of the authors' own work, I have sought deliberately to juxtapose familiar, 'canonical' texts with lesser-known, often unpublished work – partly to be as representative as possible, but also to facilitate my revisionist critical project. For the same reasons, I have considered material from a variety of genres: poems, stories, diaries, journals and letters are the subject of close readings. Yet the authors' writings, while being the primary focus, are not the only form of text subject to conceptualised appraisal: the Caseg Broadsheets – composite texts described recently as 'one of the most interesting art/word collaborations of the last century'¹¹ – have a place in this enquiry, as do visual 'texts' that have had a significant influence on the received image of Lewis and Davies (material in this category includes portraits of the author, illustrations accompanying their work, and cover designs for collections of their work). Early reviews, critical essays and articles likewise constitute raw material for theorised discussions of the ways that both authors are mediated to their readers.

¹¹ Francesca Rhydderch, 'Words and Pictures', *New Welsh Review*, No. 71 (Spring 2006), 6-7 (p. 7).

In a scholarly enquiry with this wide-ranging remit, the critic's theoretical 'toolkit', as it were, should reflect an analogous breadth. Accordingly, this thesis employs at strategic points a variety of conceptual categories and lenses – including recent work on the *unheimlich* or 'uncanny'; the insights of Book History, particularly notions of the book (to quote D.F. McKenzie's formulation) as an 'expressive form',¹² and recent applications of postcolonial theory in the context of Welsh Writing in English. Three conceptual approaches or theoretical frames have proved particularly important to the formulation of this study – the first being the explicitly comparative frame of reference in which all discussion takes place. As is evident from the chronology accompanying this Introduction – a document compiled as an aid to orientation – the biographical trajectories of Davies and Lewis overlap in various ways: both, for example, pursued careers in education, and experienced periods of voluntary and enforced exile from Wales. Additionally, we should note that both have already been the subject of comparative studies. Idris Davies, for instance, has been paired with James Kitchener Davies¹³ and Langston Hughes,¹⁴ and Alun Lewis with Keith Douglas¹⁵ and Alun Llywelyn-Williams.¹⁶ It is all the more surprising, then, that Lewis and Davies have only once – and then very briefly – been compared with each other.

¹² See 'The Book as an Expressive Form' in McKenzie's *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts: The Panizzi Lectures 1985* (London: British Library, 1986), pp. 1-21.

¹³ Ioan Williams, 'Two Welsh Poets: James Kitchener Davies (1902-52); Idris Davies (1905-53)', *Poetry Wales*, 16, No. 4 (Spring 1981), 104-11.

¹⁴ See Daniel G. Williams, 'Y Coch a'r Du: Moderniaeth a Chenedligrwydd yn Harlem a Chymru', in *Gweld Sêr: Cymru a Chanrif America*, ed. by M. Wynn Thomas (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 2001), pp. 166-203 (esp. pp. 184-97).

¹⁵ Richard Poole, 'Impersonality and the Soldier-Poet: Alun Lewis and Keith Douglas', in *The Welsh Connection: Essays by Past and Present Members of the Department of English Language and Literature, University College of North Wales, Bangor*, ed. by William Tydeman (Llandysul: Gomer, 1986), pp. 130-58.

¹⁶ Thomas, *Internal Difference*, pp. 49-67; Greg Hill, 'A Oes Golau yn y Gwyll? Alun Llywelyn-Williams ac Alun Lewis', in *DiFfinio Dwy Lenyddiaeth Cymru*, ed. by M. Wynn Thomas (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1995), pp. 120-44.

In 1978, John Pikoulis read four poems by Davies against Lewis's 'The Mountain over Aberdare' and Glyn Jones's 'Hills', his primary objective being to map these compositions onto a paradigmatic conception of the internally-divided valley poet; his comparative act was thus confined to a narrow remit.¹⁷ No critic has ever attempted a book-length comparative engagement that draws on the full range of their creative outputs; that task is attempted here for the first time. The end result, it is hoped, will be the desired objective of all comparative studies – identification of new points of contact across oeuvres and the promotion of fresh approaches to familiar texts.

Besides being explicitly comparative, the theoretical rationale of this study is also strongly inflected by a historicist method. Historicist criticism's emphasis on the excavation of multiple contexts (biographical, social, and cultural) as a means of exposing hidden aspects of a text's significance dovetails neatly with the defamiliarising project of this thesis. Adoption of a predominantly historicist approach to literature is not, of course, an enterprise without its perils and pitfalls. At the beginning of her recent thesis on Alun Lewis, Carrie Jadud offers the following cautionary words to those critics who search diligently for correspondences between an author's life and his/her art:

¹⁷ John Pikoulis, "'East and East and East': Alun Lewis and the Vocation of Poetry", *Anglo-Welsh Review*, No. 63 (1978), 39-65.

Over-reliance on biography can result in disturbingly teleological readings that place the writing at the service of predetermined historical trajectories. Furthermore, the incautious critic stands in danger not only of interpreting the literature in a manner over-restricted by biography, but of reading the text *primarily* as a vehicle for interpreting the person who wrote it. To treat the author's work as a window into the life of the author denies the writer's agency; the act of writing even the most transparently autobiographical work is not only a process of representation but one of mediation, of intervention.¹⁸

Biography is of course only one strand of 'history', and Jadud might be seen as fetishizing that single strand. Nonetheless, her point is well taken. Teleologies and trajectories do feature in this thesis, but their use is always sanctioned by textual evidence. Likewise, the literary text is treated in this enquiry as a space for the articulation of cultural identities, but due emphasis is always given to the writing's status as imaginative inscription.

The last of my major theoretical debts is to the increasingly fashionable academic field of border studies. In the context of 'contemporary postmodern and postcolonial thinking', M. Wynn Thomas has written, 'the relationship between margins and centres has, in effect, been reversed';¹⁹ the consequence, he suggests, is that borders and peripheries are now recognised as prime loci 'of that meeting, mingling and cross-fertilization that is regarded as the creative essence of contemporary social and cultural life'.²⁰ The most influential advocate of this position has undoubtedly been Homi Bhabha, whose seminal *The Location of Culture* (1994) represents interstitial border space as the formative ground of identity and subjectivity:

¹⁸ Jadud, "The Fragile Universe of Self", p. 7. I have omitted the footnote in the original.

¹⁹ M. Wynn Thomas, "A Grand Harlequinade": The Border Writing of Nigel Heseltine', *Welsh Writing in English: A Yearbook of Critical Essays*, 11 (2006-7), 51-68 (pp. 51-52).

²⁰ Thomas, "A Grand Harlequinade", p. 52.

These ‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself.²¹

By tracking Lewis and Davies across a wide range of literal and conceptual frontiers, this thesis foregrounds the multiple, fluid, dislocated nature of the identities inscribed in their writings. It thereby gives the lie to the orthodox fictions constructing both as rooted, unified individuals.

The task of tracing the origins and development of those fictions is undertaken by Chapters 1 and 2. These chapters extend the traditional function of the literature review, and constitute original critical and cultural interventions. Hitherto, no scholar has attempted a systematic, conceptualised survey of the critical and cultural reception of Lewis and Davies; observations have been made on the subject, but these have tended to be piecemeal and implicit in nature. Beginning with the texts or collections that secured them mainstream cultural cachet, these opening chapters examine the strategies of mediation adopted by editors and editions of their work down to the present day. Consideration is also given to the ways that anthologists have contributed to the creation of distinctive cultural profiles. Each chapter concludes with a detailed summary of Lewis’s and Davies’s mediation by secondary critical literature, both during their lifetimes and subsequently. Together, they define the orthodoxies that the thesis sets out to contest, and give a sense of the ways in which my enquiry seeks to challenge them.

²¹ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994 (rpr. 2002)), pp. 1-2.

The work of contesting received interpretations is continued by Chapter 3, whose focus is Idris Davies's representations of Welsh space. Taking issue with received critical opinion, it reveals the extent to which he was a non-indigenous writer in terms of geographical and cultural emplacement. It also situates his writing on Wales in new cultural contexts, most particularly that of literary Modernism. Conceptualised discussion of the contested spaces of Davies's native Rhymney Valley suggests that he was never, in fact, securely placed in terms of cultural and class affiliation within proletarian, industrialised south Wales; instead, my analysis stresses the liminality of his social and cultural standpoint. In the process, it identifies parallels with Alun Lewis and his native environment, the Aman Valley. Building on foundations laid by that discussion, the chapter proceeds to offer fresh interpretations of *Gwalia Deserta* and *The Angry Summer*, the poetic sequences on which Davies's reputation currently rests. Challenging orthodox readings of those texts as authentic 'documents' of the experience of particular historical events in south Wales, I read them as highly sophisticated, layered examples of displaced or exilic 'self-' or 'life-writing'. Counterpointing these discussions of 'canonical' texts is a recuperative interpretation of 'Gwalia My Song', which makes a case for reading this lesser-known sequence as an inscription of Davies's disillusioning returns to south Wales in the war years and the late 1940s. In the chapter's closing subsections, the focus returns to liminal space. The penultimate section considers the self-contradictory formulations of political identity emanating from liminal upland space, while the last looks at Davies's representations of rural Cardiganshire (his temporary base during the last

months of the Second World War), focusing particularly on a little-known essay that reflects his uncertainty as to how best to ‘write’ rural west Wales.

Following on from that discussion, Chapter 4 considers Alun Lewis’s literary negotiations of Wales’s geographical and cultural spaces. I establish that he, like Davies, was ambiguously located in relation to his native social and cultural community. Beginning, where Chapter 3 concluded, in rural Cardiganshire, Chapter 4’s first section contends that Lewis was ambiguously placed in relation to its agrarian communities – an uncertainty of emplacement that is reflected, I argue, in the ambivalence of register that is characteristic of his evocations of rural west Wales. I also discern in ‘On Embarkation’ – a poem that features a return to the Cardiganshire coast – traces of the ethic of indifference that achieves full potency in Lewis’s writing on the jungle. The following section is interested in texts that reflect an ambiguous sense of emplacement in relation to the industrialised valleys; it focuses particularly on the way they dramatise the ‘English’ bias of Lewis’s cultural affiliations, and on the difficulties this posed for the representation of Welsh industrial space. The concluding section switches the emphasis to cultural space, encountering Lewis in the unfamiliar role of an excavator and moderniser of Welsh cultural tradition. Focusing explicitly on the Caseg Broadsheets, it explores that project’s articulation of a trans- or intra-national cultural vision. It also foregrounds the extent to which the venture was for Lewis an autobiographical project, showing how the sheets inscribed and reinflected his own cultural identities.

Chapter 5 shifts the thematic focus onto experiences of war, locating Idris Davies explicitly, and for the first time, under the rubric of civilian war writer. It

contends that his representations of the Second World War should be read as products of distance from his native community and from the fighting. Beginning with a summary of Davies's wartime biographical trajectory, I offer a detailed reading of a fascinating example of his wartime diary-writing – one attuned to the exilic context from which the document emerged, and to the cultural implications of keeping a diary in the 1930s and 1940s. That analysis is then taken further through comparison with journals by civilian, anglophone Welsh writers such as Brenda Chamberlain, John Petts, and Caradoc Evans. The exercise helps locate Davies's diary in relation to 'Anglo-Welsh' civilian war writing; it also gives much-needed exposure to a neglected subgenre of Welsh literary responses to war. The chapter concludes with a preliminary examination of the neglected war lyrics published in Davies's third book – a corpus of work that in its dual significance as war writing and autobiographical statement recalls the multi-layered poetics of the major sequences.

The sixth and final chapter explores ideas of transit, transitiveness (or its opposite) and liminality in relation to Lewis's wartime literary output. It begins in the intransitive space of the military training camp, and considers how writings composed during Lewis's military training express the predicament of soldiers lacking the object – war – around which their military identities have been constructed. Also discussed are the fractures and dislocations pertaining to the soldier-self, and the search for other, analogous selves. Section two, by contrast, focuses on Lewis's creative engagement with the strange confluences and necessary adjustments that characterised the civilian's experience of war. In section three, I turn to the writing produced during the voyage out to India; my

readings of the poetry of transit written aboard ship (and collected in Part Two of *Ha! Ha! Among the Trumpets*) give special emphasis to the uncanniness of the mobile space of the troopship, and to the cultural transitions and transgression of boundaries the journey entailed. The chapter concludes with a reading of the works in which Lewis responded to India and Burma – works in which one may track the writer's progress towards the annihilation of the jungle.

Idris Davies and Alun Lewis: A Dialogic Chronology

Year	Significant Events	Idris Davies	Alun Lewis
1905	Evan Roberts Revival	Born 6 January at 16 Field Street, Rhymney	—
1909		Starts school	—
1915		—	Born 1 July at 16 Llanwynno Road, Cwmaman
1917	Battle of Passchendaele	—	February: His father, Thomas John (Tom) Lewis, is called up for military service. The family move to Redcar, the location of his training
1918	11 November: End of First World War	—	March: Tom Lewis is severely wounded in France; convalescence at Glasgow's Great Western Infirmary follows September: After Tom is discharged from the army, the family return to Cwmaman, setting up home at 61 Brynhyfryd
1919	Treaty of Versailles; Establishment of League of Nations	January: Leaves elementary school, beginning work underground at McClaren Colliery, Abertysswg	—
1920	Weimar Republic established in Germany	Summer: Moves to Maerdy Pit, Pontlottyn	Autumn: Starts school at Glynhafod Infants
1925	Mussolini establishes dictatorship in Italy	Autumn: Begins attending evening classes in Middle Rhymney School	Leaves Glynhafod Infants for Cwmaman Boys' School August: First holiday at Penbryn, Cardiganshire
1926	3-12 May: General Strike. The miners of south Wales stay out on strike until the end of the year	Loses a finger as a consequence of an underground accident. Miners' strike begins shortly after his return to work September/October: Returns to work underground	Sits County Entrance Exam, winning a scholarship to Cowbridge Grammar School, Glamorgan
1927		Summer: Closure of Maerdy Pit. After a brief period as a surface worker at another pit, he is unemployed	—
1929	October: Wall Street Crash	Passes Oxford Local Examination, and begins work as an unpaid pupil-teacher at Middle Rhymney School	—
1930		September: Begins a two-year training course at Loughborough College, Leicestershire. Unsited to handicraft elements of the course he attends, on the	—

		Principal's suggestion, an intensive English Literature course at Nottingham University for two days each week	
1932		1 August: Qualifies as a teacher 21 November: Joins staff of Laysterne Junior School in London Borough of Hoxton	September: Starts BA in History at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth
1935		Summer: First visit to Ireland	Awarded First Class Honours in History September: Awarded the Harry Thornton Pickles Postgraduate Studentship by Manchester University
1937	Neville Chamberlain succeeds Baldwin as British Prime Minister	—	May: Attends International Peace Conference at Pontigny, northern France Completes his MA dissertation on Ottobono, a thirteenth-century Papal Legate September: Returns to Aberystwyth to begin teacher training course
1938	German army marches into Austria	August: <i>Gwalia Deserta</i> published	Summer: Works unofficially at the offices of the <i>Aberdare Leader</i> August: Walking tour in Normandy with Richard Mills, a fellow student at Aberystwyth November: Accepts temporary post as History Master at Lewis Boys' School, Pengam
1939	1 September: German invasion of Poland. Britain and France declare war on Germany (3 September)	August: Visits southern France with Tom Buchanan, a teaching colleague 1 September: Arrives in Pytchley, Northamptonshire with first group of evacuated schoolchildren in his role as an evacuation officer. He keeps a daily record of his stay (the 'Pytchley Diary') Awarded University of London Diploma in History	May: Meets Gweno Ellis at the Three Valleys Festival in Mountain Ash November: His appointment at Pengam is made permanent
1940	May/June: Evacuation of British and French forces from Dunkirk; Fall of France (June) September: <i>Luftwaffe</i> begins heavy bombing of British cities	'Dunkirk 1940 (For Z. and B.)' and 'September 1940' probably composed in this year 2 August: Leaves Pytchley, returning to London after short holiday in Rhymney 21 September: Arrives in Meesden, Hertfordshire with a	15 May: Enlists with the Royal Engineers in London, leaving the same day for No. 1 Railway Training Centre, Longmoor, Hampshire October: Composes 'All Day It Has Rained...' and 'To Edward Thomas'

	Battle of Britain	second group of evacuated schoolchildren. Moves shortly afterwards to Anstey, where he remains until April 1942	November: 'Lance-Jack' published in <i>Life and Letters To-day</i>
1941	Soviet Union and United States enter the war	June-July: First draft of <i>The Angry Summer</i> composed at Anstey	Mid-June: Leaves Longmoor for Infantry Training Centre at Gloucester 5 July: Marries Gweno Ellis in Gloucester 11 July: Arrives at the Officer Cadet Training Unit at Heysham Towers, near Morecambe in Lancashire 31 October: Leaves Heysham a Second Lieutenant 29 November: Joins the Sixth Battalion of the South Wales Borderers, then based at Woodbridge, Suffolk November/December: Publication of Caseg Broadsheets 1 and 2
1942	General Montgomery victorious at El Alamein November: Beveridge Report published	April: Returns to London to teach at a school in Shoreditch November: Accompanies a third group of evacuees to Treherbert in the Rhondda Valley	March: Caseg Broadsheets 3 and 4 published March: <i>Raiders' Dawn and Other Poems</i> published March: South Wales Borderers move to Orwell Park, Suffolk April/May: The Borderers move to Felixstowe; Lewis attends the battle school at Aldeburgh June: Caseg Broadsheets 5 and 6 published 4 June: Arrives at Bovington, Dorset for training at the Royal Armoured Corps Fighting Vehicle School August: Rejoins the Borderers at Southend September: Spends short embarkation leave with Gweno on the Cardiganshire coast. He composes the first version of 'On Embarkation' at this time October: Five thousand South Wales Borderers and men of the Ninth Royal Sussex Regiment leave Liverpool aboard the <i>Athlone Castle</i> , their destination India 15 November: <i>Athlone Castle</i> reaches Bahia, Brazil 4 December: <i>Athlone Castle</i> reaches Durban, South Africa

			17 December: <i>Athlone Castle</i> docks in Bombay. Lewis's battalion travel on to nearby Nira
1943	British and American forces invade Italy	March: <i>The Angry Summer</i> published December: Composes 'David Allen Evans, R.A.F.'	January: <i>The Last Inspection and Other Stories</i> published 13 January: Fractures jaw during a regimental football match, spending six weeks in the Junior Officers' Ward of Poona Hospital. Composes the poems 'In Hospital: Poona: 1', 'In Hospital Poona: 2' and 'Burma Casualty', along with the short stories 'Ward 'O' 3 (b)' and 'The Earth is a Syllable' 30 April: Lewis's battalion reaches Bhiwandi, in the Western Ghats 21 May: Battalion moves to Juhu July: Writes 'The Orange Grove' 24 July: Meets and falls in love with Freda Aykroyd August-September: Attends Military Intelligence School at Karachi 21 September: Spends five days with Aykroyd in Bombay November: Hospitalised for a week (malarial fever) December: Reconnaissance trip into the Burmese jungle
1944	June: D-Day landings in Normandy, marking the beginning of the Allied invasion of France R.A. Butler's Education Act	November: In poor health, Davies leaves Treherbert to return to Rhymney for a short convalescence. He subsequently returns briefly to Treherbert before receiving notice of a new posting	January: Revises contents of <i>Ha! Ha! Among the Trumpets</i> , taking account of Robert Graves's advice 13 February: Lewis and the Borderers board a troop train to Calcutta, before journeying by boat to Chittagong and on to Cox's Bazar 26 February: Reaches Bawli Bazar, fifteen miles behind the front line 4 March: Requests permission to join B Company at Goppe Pass, on the front line 5 March: Death at Goppe Pass from a head wound inflicted by his own revolver
1945	Second World War ends in Europe	8 January: Arrives at Llandysul, Cardiganshire with his	July: <i>Ha! Ha! Among the Trumpets: Poems in Transit</i>

	(8 May) and Far East (15 August) Landslide Labour victory in the July general election; Clement Attlee becomes Prime Minister	fourth and final group of evacuees January: Composes 'Teify Side', a short travel essay 15 June: Leaves Llandysul, arriving back in London on 18 June Teaching post at Whitmore Primary School August: <i>Tonypandy and Other Poems</i> published August-December: Composes much of the 'Gwalia My Song' sequence	published
1946	National Insurance introduced in Britain	March: Composes his verse-play, 'Beyond the Black Tips'	Publication of <i>Letters from India</i> , edited by Gwyn Jones and Gweno Lewis
1947	Nationalisation of coal and other industries; transfer of power to an independent India, Pakistan and Burma	June: Returns to Rhymney Valley after securing a teaching post at Cwmsyfiog School. His father dies within a week of his return	—
1948	Aneurin Bevan launches National Health Service	Moves with his mother from 16 Field Street to 7 Victoria Road, Rhymney	—
1949	NATO founded	—	April: <i>In the Green Tree</i> published
1950	Outbreak of Korean War	Summer holiday in Scotland	—
1951	Festival of Britain; Conservatives win general election, and Churchill returns as Prime Minister	Summer: Final visit to Ireland December: Experiences sudden pain on a morning walk to Cwmsyfiog. The incident marks the onset of his final illness	—
1952	Death of King George VI; proclamation of Elizabeth II	January: Undergoes unsuccessful operation for abdominal cancer at Tredegar Hospital	—
1953	Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II	20 March: <i>Selected Poems</i> published April 6: Death at 7 Victoria Road, Rhymney	—

The student has requested that this electronic version of the thesis does not include the main body of the work - i.e. the chapters and conclusion. The other sections of the thesis are available as a research resource.