

Aberystwyth University

King George IV's Visit to Holyhead

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Dublin Core

Title

King George IV's Visit to Holyhead | Ymweliad Brenin IV â Chaergybi

Subject

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Holyhead

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Creator

Rita Singer

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English

Welsh

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Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

Lede

Few events produced such excitement in this little town at the edge of the Irish Sea as the first royal visit in centuries; when King George IV was delayed on his journey to Ireland in 1821.

Lede (Welsh)

Prin iawn yw'r digwyddiadau a lwyddodd i greu cymaint o gyffro yn y dref fechan hon ar lan Môr Iwerddon ag y gwnaeth yr ymweliad brenhinol cyntaf mewn canrifoedd; pan y bu'n rhaid oedi taith Brenin George IV i Iwerddon ym 1821.

Story

The day for which Holyhead had so anxiously prepared had finally arrived: newly-crowned King George IV (1820-1830) was making his first visit to Holyhead as a stop-off in his inaugural grand tour. In the early evening hours of Monday, August 6, 1821, beacons were lit around Holyhead Mountain to signal the first sighting of the royal yacht. The town responded by firing a volley of artillery from Salt Island to show their happy anticipation of the king's presence – and then nothing happened.

Low wind and the tide prevented the yacht from entering Holyhead Bay until midnight; a serious delay in the king's itinerary. A message from the royal yacht indicated that the king would need to proceed without visiting the town of Holyhead on this occasion. Fortunately for the king's subjects in Holyhead, continued adverse conditions (a steady westerly breeze) did not accommodate these plans for progress; in the event, the king would be detained in the area for several days.

After spending the first night aboard the royal yacht in the bay, the king was persuaded to finally come ashore to Holyhead town – following some persuasion by Henry Paget, 1st Marquess of Anglesey. The Marquess additionally offered hospitality at his country seat, Plas Newydd, on the other side of Anglesey.

George IV thus stepped foot on Holy Island on Tuesday afternoon, and was greeted with jubilation and honours. Local baron Sir John Stanley gave a grand address on behalf of the town of Holyhead and its neighbourhood. After this ceremony, the king and his entourage journeyed across Anglesey to spend the night at Plas Newydd. That same evening, a lone rider set out from London with an urgent message from the royal court.

George spent Wednesday holding court at Plas Newydd to delegations from Anglesey and Carnarvonshire. The rider's dispatch from London arrived, heralding the death of the king's wife, Caroline. It's not recorded whether this dampened King George's spirits. Considering the couple's decades-long hostility towards another, he may have been more concerned about the inconvenience to his trip. In any case, he returned to Holyhead in the afternoon, hoping to make the trip to Ireland.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday rolled on, but still the winds detained the royal fleet. By this time the news of the Queen's demise had spread, and journeying on with full pomp and

circumstance would have been in poor taste. After all, the intention of this journey was for the king to win over his subjects, who might be persuaded to forget his party-prince, spendthrift past.

Notwithstanding continued westerly winds, the king eventually boarded an ordinary mailboat: the steam packet *Lightning*, captained by John MacGregor Skinner. They set off for Ireland on Sunday morning. When George IV then arrived in Ireland nearly a week late, there was no grand welcome for him – the first king to make a state visit since Richard II. The royal yacht and fleet remained in Holyhead, and nobody expected the king to arrive in such low-key style. Nevertheless, George appears to have appreciated the irony. He offered Captain Skinner a knighthood on the spot, which the sea captain refused. Instead, the intrepid *Lightning* was renamed *Royal Sovereign George the Fourth*.

Almost exactly two months later, the *Royal Sovereign George the Fourth* broke down in Dublin Bay. Her mainshaft broken and completely unmanageable, she was towed back to Holyhead.

Story (Welsh)

Roedd y diwrnod mawr y bu cryn edrych ymlaen iddo yng Nghaergybi wedi cyrraedd o'r diwedd: byddai Brenin George IV (1820-1830), a oedd newydd gael ei goroni, yn ymweld â Chaergybi am y tro cyntaf yn ystod ei daith fawr agoriadol. Yn ystod oriau mân y bore ar ddydd Llun, 6 Awst, 1821, cynnwyd coelcerthi o gwmpas Mynydd Caergybi i ddynodi'r cip cyntaf ar y cwch hwyliau brenhinol. Ymatebodd y dref trwy danio canonau o Ynys Halen i gofnodi'r ffaith eu bod yn edrych ymlaen yn eiddgar at bresenoldeb y brenin – yna digwyddodd dim byd.

Roedd gwynt isel a'r llanw wedi atal y cwch hwyliau rhag cael mynediad i Fae Caergybi tan hanner nos; ac roedd hyn yn oedi rhaglen y brenin yn sylweddol. Roedd neges a anfonwyd o'r cwch hwyliau brenhinol yn nodi y byddai angen i'r brenin fynd yn ei flaen heb ymweld â thref Caergybi ar yr achlysur hwn. Yn ffodus i ddinasyddion y brenin yng Nghaergybi, roedd y tywydd yn wael (awel gyson o'r gorllewin), felly nid oedd hyn yn helpu ei gynlluniau; fel y digwyddodd hi, bu'r brenin yn yr ardal am sawl diwrnod.

Ar ôl treulio'r noson gyntaf ar y cwch hwyliau brenhinol yn y bae, perswadiwyd y brenin i fynd i'r lan o'r diwedd ac i dref Caergybi – yn dilyn rhywfaint o berswâd gan Henry Paget, Marcwis 1af Ynys Môn. Yn ychwanegol i hyn, cynigiodd y Marcwis letygarwch yn ei blasty yn y wlad, Plas Newydd, ar ochr arall Ynys Môn.

Felly, camodd George IV ar Ynys Gybi ar brynhawn dydd Mawrth, ac fe'i cyfarchwyd gyda gorfoledd ac anrhydedd. Rhoddodd y barwn lleol, Syr John Stanley, anerchiad crand ar ran tref Caergybi a'r cyffiniau. Ar ôl y seremoni hon, teithiodd y brenin a'i osgordd ar draws Ynys Môn i dreulio'r noson ym Mhlas Newydd. Y noson honno, roedd marchog wedi gadael Llundain ar ei ben ei hun gyda neges frys o'r llys brenhinol.

Treuliodd George ddydd Mercher yn cynnal llys ym Mhlas Newydd i ddirprwyaethau o Ynys Môn a Sir Gaernarfon. Cyrhaeddodd y marchog o Lundain gyda'r newyddion am farwolaeth gwraig y brenin, Caroline. Ni chofnodir a oedd hyn wedi digalonni Brenin George neu beidio. O ystyried yr elyniaeth rhwng y ddau dros ddegawdau, efallai y byddai wedi bod yn pryderu mwy am anghyfleustra hyn i'w daith. Sut bynnag, dychwelodd i Gaergybi yn y prynhawn, gan obeithio teithio i Iwerddon.

Aeth dydd Iau, dydd Gwener a dydd Sadwrn heibio, ac roedd y gwyntoedd yn rhwystro'r fflyd frenhinol o hyd. Erbyn hyn, roedd y newyddion am farwolaeth y Frenhines wedi mynd ar led, a byddai parhau ar ei daith gyda rhwysg a rhodres llawn wedi bod yn ddi-chwaeth.

Wedi'r cyfan, bwriad ei daith oedd sicrhau cefnogaeth ei ddinasyddion, y gallent gael eu perswadio i anghofio am ei orffennol gwastrafflyd fel tywysog a oedd yn dipyn o bartiwr.

Er gwaethaf y gwyntoedd gorllewinol a oedd yn parhau, penderfynodd y brenin deithio ar long bost gyffredin yn y diwedd: pacedlong *Lightning*, a'r capten oedd John MacGregor Skinner. Gadawont am Iwerddon ar y bore Sul. Pan gyrhaeddodd George IV Iwerddon bron i wythnos yn hwyr, nid oedd croeso mawr iddo – y brenin cyntaf i gynnal ymweliad gwladwriaethol er Richard II. Arhosodd y fflyd a'r cwch hwyliau brenhinol yng Nghaergybi, ac nid oedd unrhyw un yn disgwyl i'r brenin gyrraedd mewn ffordd mor ddi-nod. Er hyn, mae'n ymddangos bod George wedi gwerthfawrogi'r eironi. Cynigiodd urddo Capten Skinner yn farchog yn y fan a'r lle, ond gwrthododd y capten llong. Yn hytrach, ail-enwyd llong ddewr *Lightning* yn *Royal Sovereign George the Fourth*.

Bron yn union ddau fis yn ddiweddarach, methodd *Royal Sovereign George the Fourth* ym Mae Dulyn. Roedd ei phrif siafft wedi torri a bu'n rhaid ei thynnu'n ôl i Gaergybi.

Factoid

Related Resources

'The landing of his Majesty, George The Fourth, at Holyhead, August 7th 1821', Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru / National Library of Wales, <http://hdl.handle.net/10107/1130960>

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Official Website