

Slander and Defamation: a New Source for Historical Dialectology

Gwenllian M. Awbery, Ann E. Jones and Richard F. Suggett

This paper originally appeared in
Cardiff Working Papers in Welsh Linguistics, 4 (1985) 1-24

Ready access to large amounts of raw data is now taken for granted by dialectologists and sociolinguists. Since the early 1950s it has been possible to taperecord natural speech in a wide variety of situations, and to store it for later analysis. There is therefore a wealth of material available for synchronic descriptive work on the linguistic usage of this recent period, and it is a comparatively simple matter to fill gaps with further programmes of recording.

For those wishing to look at the spoken language as it was in earlier periods however, the situation is rather more frustrating. We can achieve an element of apparent time-depth by recording speakers of different ages and assuming that the speech of older members of the community represents an earlier stage, that of younger members a later development.¹ It is possible in fact, where a sound archive has been in existence for some time, to extend the time depth quite considerably. The earliest speakers recorded for the Welsh Folk Museum sound archive, for instance, were born in the 1860s, and one or two as early as the late 1850s. The number of tapes which allow one to go back as far as this are comparatively few however, even in a large and long-established archive of this kind.

Very occasionally one may come across much earlier recordings of natural speech. In 1907 and 1909, for instance, an Austrian professor, Dr. Rudolf Trebitsch, visited Wales and recorded a total of fourteen speakers on phonograph roles. These recordings have been preserved in the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, and tape copies have now been deposited in the Welsh Folk Museum sound archive.² The oldest of these informants was born in 1840, and several others in the 1850s and 1860s. I have never come across live recordings of anyone born earlier than 1840 though; somewhere around this date must come a cut-off so far as direct evidence of linguistic usage is concerned.

Relying on the work of early dialectologists, we can reach back a little further. J. J. Glanmor Davies, in a Ph.D. thesis on Ceinewydd Welsh completed in 1934, relied on informants born in 1850 and 1852. O.H. Fynes-Clinton's study of Bangor Welsh, published in 1913, quotes informants born as early as 1835 and 1839. Henry Sweet's description of the dialect of Nant Gwynant was published in 1883 and must surely take us back further again, though sadly he does not give details of who his informants were and when they were born. Beyond this point evidence becomes anecdotal, and it is more difficult to gather reliable information about the spoken language.

* * * * *

It is heartening therefore to discover an abundant and hitherto unexplored source for the spoken language in the legal records of early modern Wales. From the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth Century actions for slander and defamation were brought before the civil and ecclesiastical courts and the records of such cases have survived in considerable numbers. A large proportion of this material has now been transcribed and edited in calendar form so that it is for the first time easily accessible to linguists who might find dealing with the original documents an onerous and daunting task.³

The most important of the secular courts which heard actions for slander was the Court of Great Sessions, established by the Act of Union, which held sessions twice a year in each Welsh county between 1542-1830. The records of this court are on the whole well preserved except for the counties of north-west Wales. Defamation cases were brought before the Consistory Courts of the four Welsh dioceses. The records of these ecclesiastical courts do not survive in quantity until the Eighteenth Century, and those for the diocese of St. Asaph have been largely lost. The complainant's case was set out in a writ and declaration (civil court) or a 'libel' (ecclesiastical court) which recorded: the names of the parties in dispute, the residence and style or occupation of the defendant and (in the ecclesiastical court) those of the plaintiff, the date and place of the offence, and - most importantly for the linguist - the exact wording of the slander or defamation. This is given in Welsh or English, according to the language of the original insult, and where the abuse was in Welsh an English translation generally follows, which is often of considerable interest.

Examples of cases from both courts are given below in calendar form, which omits the repetitive common form of the legal documents but preserves the unique detail of each case. The first case is taken from the plea rolls of the Court of Great Sessions held for Anglesey:

1660 Sessions held at Beaumaris on 1 Oct. 12 Charless II
(reference: Wales 16/9)
David Griffith v. David ap Moris of Llangristiolis
yeoman (damages claimed: £100)
Declaration (membrane 8^b): The def. on 16 Sept.
12 Chas. II at Erriannell spoke of the plt. these
scandalous Welsh words:
"Lleidir wyt ti a ladrottaist ddau oyn o ddar
John Owen David."
In English:
"Thou art a theefe and thou hast stolen two lambs from
John Owen David."
Plea: Not guilty; issue [Not tried].

The second example is taken from the records of the Consistory Court of Llandaff and illustrates the form of cases brought before the ecclesiastical courts.

1738 Jennett John of Baislegg, spinster c. Samuel David of
Michaelston y Vedw.
Libel (reference: LL/CC/G 850): Exhibited 12 May
The def. in Nov. - April last at Coed Kernew defamed
the plt. by speaking these Welsh words:
"Whore iw hi a my fi gesim hi gant waith."
In English:
"She is a whore and I have had her a hundred times."

Some entries are considerably longer, involving a series of pleas or the depositions of witnesses, but the two shown here are in the main typical as to length as the majority of cases did not proceed to trial or judgement. They are also typical as to content, in that the secular courts dealt largely with accusations of theft and other felonies, while the ecclesiastical courts heard allegations of sexual misdemeanours.

We find then in these records numerous examples of reported speech dating from the period 1542-1830, and we have reasonably full information as to when and where they were spoken, and some detail about the social status of the people involved. There are of course problems. The records have not survived evenly and some periods and localities are more fully represented than others, with frustrating gaps in the available data. The content of these cases furthermore is rather restricted, pre-selected as it is according to legal criteria, and consisting of verbal abuse which was actionable. The seriousness of the legal context makes it likely that the words complained of were accurately reported. but the relationship between spoken and written forms is by not means unproblematic; we must for instance be alert to the significance of the varied spelling conventions used by the clerks in the courts. Overall, however, we may feel confident that the language recorded is natural and informal rather than literary and hypercorrect.

In principle it seems possible to extract linguistic information of several different types for the period covered by these records:-

1. the geographical distribution of certain dialectal features of Welsh
2. certain dialectal features of Anglo-Welsh dialects
3. the location of the territorial and social language boundaries between Welsh and English
4. patterns of lexical borrowing from English into Welsh

The remainder of this paper is devoted to an enquiry of the first type; we look at the distribution of one morphological feature in Welsh, using these records as our source material.

* * * * *

The feature in question relates to the inflectional morphology of the verb. In contemporary Welsh there are two alternative realisations of the 3sg. past inflection on the verb, -odd and -ws, giving for instance gwelodd and gwelws for 'he/she saw'. Of the two, -odd is found in the standard language and in the dialects of north and south-west Wales,⁴ while -ws is limited to the dialects of the south-east. It is not possible, owing to gaps in the available information, to delimit this south-eastern region precisely, but it clearly includes at least Glamorgan, central and southern Breconshire, and eastern districts of Carmarthenshire.⁵

In medieval literary Welsh the inflection -wys, which simplified early to -ws, was by far the most common variant. By the end of the Fourteenth Century however it had been almost completely supplanted, so far as the literary language was concerned, by the competing form -odd, the timing of this change being established by the study of literary texts dating from this period.⁶ What is much more obscure is the question of when the modern dialectal pattern took shape, with -ws confined in the spoken language to the south-east of the country. It is hoped that mapping the examples of -ws and -odd which appear in these slander and defamation records will allow us to shed some light on this process.

It was thought best to map the four centuries represented in the data separately, in case the pattern should appear to change through time, and the results are shown in Maps 1-4, which summarise the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries respectively. Clearly the amount of information available varies considerably from one to another, and the areas most fully represented are different in each case.⁷ Such problems must however be expected in the case of historical material of this kind and should not prevent our attempting to make some progress.

Three further points should perhaps be made briefly concerning the way these maps were prepared. First, the location of the incident reported was used as the basis for mapping, since it is given in almost every case, whereas the home village or parish of the speaker is given much less regularly. Where the home village is given it is usually identical to the location of incident, or close by, and it seems unlikely therefore that mapping home villages would yield a picture markedly different from that shown here. It would just be much thinner in coverage.

Second a certain simplification has been imposed on the linguistic data in mapping a straightforward opposition between -ws and -odd. The category -ws includes the distinct but related forms -ws and -wys, as in dwedws ~ dwedwys, 'he/she said', and also occasional examples of -as and -os, as in speilias 'he/she stole' and miscarrios 'she miscarried'. The other category -odd includes both -odd itself and -oedd, as in dygodd ~ dygoedd 'he/she stole'.

The third caveat relates to the irregular verb cael 'to get'. In the modern dialects the 3sg past form câs 'he/she got' is found over a much wider area than the inflection -ws in regular verbs, extending north into Montgomeryshire and west into Cardiganshire and Pembrokeshire.⁸ It seems likely therefore that its distribution may have been idiosyncratic in the past too, and that its inclusion in these maps might well distort the overall picture. All examples of cael have accordingly been omitted from these maps, and the distribution of -ws and -odd in regular verbs only has been shown.⁹

Let us now consider each of these maps in turn, looking first at Map 1, and the Sixteenth Century. Examples from this period are rare. Only four examples of -ws appear, all in the south-east, at Defynnog in Breconshire, and at Swansea, Ewenni and Splott in Glamorgan. Three examples of -odd can be located definitely, at Wrexham in Denbighshire, and at Llanbister and Llansantfraid-yn-Elfael in Radnorshire. There are five other instances of -odd, one from Denbighshire and four from Montgomeryshire, but in each case either no location is given, or the place name in the record cannot be traced.¹⁰

The Seventeenth Century, as we see from Map 2, is much more fully represented, with a large number of examples from most parts of Wales. We find -odd consistently in the north and the south-west, while -ws is characteristic of the south-east. This south-eastern region includes a good deal of Radnorshire, and one isolated example from eastern Carmarthenshire.

The Eighteenth Century is well supplied with data from the south-east, as may be seen from Map 3. The variant -ws is used regularly, though with occasional examples of -odd as well,¹¹ in an area extending north into Radnorshire and west into Carmarthenshire. In the north and the south-west -odd is used exclusively.

Data from the Nineteenth Century, shown in Map 4, is once again very thin. The few examples which are available come from the north and the south-west, and with the exception of one rogue -ws form found at Cilrhedyn in Pembrokeshire, all have the -odd variant.

What conclusions may therefore be drawn from this material? Maps 1-3 suggest clearly that the restriction of the 3sg. past inflection -ws to south-eastern dialects can be traced back at least as far as the Sixteenth Century. The picture is reasonably full for the Eighteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, though not detailed enough in parts of Mid Wales and Carmarthenshire for definite isoglosses to be drawn. Information from the Sixteenth Century is much thinner, but what is available is compatible with the assumption that the modern distribution was already fixed in this early period.

A second point worth making is that this material shows clearly that much of Radnorshire is to be included in the south-eastern area characterised by -ws. The situation as to dialect boundaries in this part of Mid Wales is often obscure, owing to the early replacement of Welsh by English, a process largely complete by the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. Definite information of this kind which links Radnorshire directly with the dialects of the south-east, is therefore of considerable significance.¹²

Map 4, for the Nineteenth Century, adds nothing new, beyond raising the question of why one rogue example of -ws should turn up as far west as Cilrhedyn in Pembrokeshire. This is well outside the normal modern -ws area, and considerably further west than any other example on these maps. For this no satisfactory explanation can be offered.

* * * * *

This paper represents a brief preliminary exploration only of what may be attempted using these slander and defamation suits as raw material for historical dialectology. We hope now to expand this project to include other dialect features, lexical and phonological as well as morphological, and to present our results in due course in a future issue of this journal.

Footnotes

1. This is not necessarily true in all cases. There may be speech characteristics conventionally associated with particular age groups, so that the speech of each cohort changes as its members get older. Or it may be that older people have modified their speech to take account of changing fashions, and no longer speak as they did in their youth. Providing that we are aware of such possible pitfalls however, this can serve as a very useful working assumption.
2. W.F.M. sound archive tape no. 6832. Transcripts of these recordings, some made by Dr. Trebitsch and others by his informants, are also held in the museum, together with full details of the name, age and background of each informant. (W.F.M. Accessions Correspondance F83.150) For an account of this early programme of recording, see Trebitsch (1908 and 1909).
3. Suggett (1983) and Suggett (unpub.). Suggett (1983) contains a calendar of the following cases: Court of Great Sessions for Denbighshire, Montgomeryshire and Glamorgan; Llandaff Consistory Court (Part 1), and the Consistory Court of the Archdeaconry of Carmarthen. Suggett (unpub.) contains a calendar of the following cases: Court of Great Sessions for Anglesey, Caernarfonshire, Flintshire, Breconshire, Radnorshire, Cardiganshire, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Glamorgan (additional cases). Llandaff Consistory Court (Parts 2 and 3), Bangor Consistory Court, and the Consistory Court of the Archdeaconry of Brecon. A selection of material from the Calendar is given in Appendix A. Richards (1952) comments on the usefulness of data of this type for historical dialectology, but he had access unfortunately only to a very restricted amount of material.
4. See for instance Fynes-Clinton (pxxvi), Morris-Jones (p51), Roberts (p1viii), and Sommerfelt (p77) for north Wales; E.J. Davies (p181), J.J.G. Davies (p443) and Thorne (1977b p391) for the south-west.
5. See Phillips (Vol. 1, p327), Rees (p52), Samuel (p222), Thorne (1977b, p391) for Glamorgan; Jones (p254) and A.R. Thomas (p252ff) for Breconshire; Thorne (1977a, pp 218-220) for Carmarthenshire.
6. Evans (p123-5).
7. For the period up till 1660 the gaps reflect the uneven survival of the source material. Analysis of sources from later periods is still in progress, and it is hoped that some of the existing gaps may be filled in due course.
8. See Griffiths (p74) for Montgomeryshire; E.J. Davies (p192-193) and J.J.G. Davies (p452) for Cardiganshire; Thorne (1977b, p395) for Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire.
9. The following examples of 3sg past cael occur in the data: Sixteenth Century - no examples; Seventeenth Century - cavas at Llanddewibrefi (Cardiganshire); Eighteenth Century - cais, câs and caes at Eglwysilan (Glamorgan), câs at Bedwellte and caes at Llanhilleth (both in Monmouthshire), cafes at Llanfigan and cavas at Penderyn (both in Breconshire), cafodd at Maenefa (Flintshire); Nineteenth Century - cafodd at Caernarfon (Caernarfonshire).
10. A key to the numbered place names in the maps may be found in Appendix B.

11. In some cases we find both -odd and -ws used side by side in the same accusation. A case from St. Bride's Major, for instance, in the records of Llandaff Consistory Court for 1740 includes the following forms - ymafaelwys: 'he grasped', dywedwys: 'he said', atkebodd: 'she answered', and clywodd: 'she heard'. Elsewhere we find that two separate cases have arisen in the same town or village, one of which uses -odd while the other uses -ws. In Llantrisant, for example, a case from the records of the Glamorgan Court of Great Sessions for 1706 includes the forms dygodd: 'he stole' and cummerodd: 'he took'. Another Llantrisant case from the records of the same court for 1761 includes the form stoppws: 'he stopped'.
12. Interestingly evidence of a rather different kind is presented elsewhere in this volume by P.W. Thomas for the cultural linking of Radnorshire with the counties of the south-east (pp123-132).

Bibliography

- Davies, E.J. (1955) Astudiaeth gymharol o dafodieithoedd Llandygwydd a Dihewyd, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Aberystwyth).
- Davies, J.J.G. (1934) Astudiaeth o Gymraeg llafar ardal Ceinewydd, Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales (Aberystwyth).
- Evans, D.S. (1964) A grammar of Middle Welsh, Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies.
- Fynes-Clinton, O.H. (1913) The Welsh Vocabulary of the Bangor District, Oxford University Press
- Griffiths, D.W. (1975) Astudiaeth eirfaol o Gymraeg llafar Llanfair Caereinion, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Aberystwyth).
- Jones, G.E. (1983) Astudiaeth o ffonoleg a gramadeg tair tafodiaith ym Mrycheiniog, Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales (Cardiff).
- Morris-Jones, A. (1926) The spoken dialect of Anglesey, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Bangor).
- Phillips, V.H. (1955) Astudiaeth o Gymraeg llafar Dyffryn Elái a'r cyffiniau, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Cardiff).
- Rees, E.C. (1958) Tafodiaith rhan isaf Dyffryn Llŵchwr, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Swansea).
- Richards, M. (1952) "Cymraeg enllibus", Y Genhinen, vol 2, pp79-82
- Roberts, A.E. (1973) Geirfa a ffurfiau Cymraeg llafar cylch Pwllheli, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Aberystwyth).
- Samuel, O.M. (1971) Astudiaeth o dafodiaith Gymraeg cylch y Rhigos, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Cardiff).
- Sommerfelt, A. (1925) Studies in Cyfeiliog Welsh, Jacob Dybwad, Oslo.
- Suggett, R.F. (1983) An analysis and calendar of early-modern Welsh defamation suits, SSRC final report (HR 6979).
- Suggett, R.F. (unpub.) Supplementary parts of the calendar (in progress).
- Sweet, H. (1882-4) "Spoken north Welsh", Transactions of the Philological Society, pp409-484
- Thomas, A.R. (1958) Astudiaeth seinegol o Gymraeg llafar Dyffryn Wysg, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (Aberystwyth).
- Thomas, P.W. (1984) "Welsh surnominal regions and their implications for historical dialectology", Cardiff Working Papers, vol. 4

- Thorne, D.A. (1977a) Astudiaeth gymharol o ffonoleg a gramadeg iaith lafar y maenoriau oddi mewn i gwmwd Carnwyllion yn Sir Gaerfyrddin, Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales (Cardiff).
- Thorne, D.A. (1977b) "Arwyddocâd y rhagenwau personol ail berson unigol yng Nglyn Nedd (Gorllewin Morgannwg), Hebron (Dyfed) a Charnhedryn (Dyfed)", The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies, vol 27, pt 3, pp.389-398.
- Trebitsch, R. (1908) Phonographische Aufnahmen der irischen Sprache in Irland und einiger Musikinstrumente in Irland und Wales, asgeführt von Dr. Rudolf Trebitsch im Sommer 1907, Bericht xii, Phonogramm-archivs-Kommission, Vienna.
- Trebitsch, R. (1909) Phonographische Aufnahmen der welschen Sprache in Wales, der manxschen Sprache auf der Insel Man, der gaelischen Sprache in Schottland und eines Musikinstrumentes in Schottland asgeführt im Sommer 1909, Bericht xviii, Phonogramm-archivs-Kommission, Vienna.

Appendix A

In this Appendix we present a brief selection only of the examples on which this paper is based. In each instance we give the following details:-

- (i) the date of the court case
- (ii) the court where it was presented
- (iii) the home village / district of the speaker (when available)
- (iv) the place where the slander occurred (when available)
- (v) a brief extract from the slander containing the -odd or -ws form. This form is underlined.
- (vi) the English translation of this quotation given in the original records

Space does not permit a full presentation of the data; this is intended only to show the kind of material used in the study.

Forms with -ws

- 1739 Glamorgan
speaker from Llangiwg; at Swansea
"Fe dyngws annudon."
in English:-
"He swore falsely."
- 1750 Glamorgan
speaker from Penlline; at Corntown
" ... ve forgews gweithredon."
in English:-
" ... he forged deeds."
- 1759 Glamorgan
speaker from Rudry; at Eglwysilan
" ... ve lladdrottws tair muttrw oir a signet a ve torws pymp clo a lladrottws doyn
guinea a coran."
in English:-
" ... who stole three gold rings and a signet and who broke open five locks and stole
two guineas and a crown."
- 1761 Glamorgan
speaker from Llantrisant; at Llantrisant
" ... efe y stoppws coach y Colonel Morgans ar y ffordd vawr."
in English:-
" ... he stopt Colonel Morgan's coach on the high way."
- 1762 Glamorgan
speaker from Laleston; at Newcastle
"Wrth ddwyn deved ar vynyddde Glyncorwg y enillws eve y estate."
in English:-
"By stealing sheep on Glyncorwg mountains he got his estate."

1763 Glamorgan
speaker from Eglwysilan; at Caerphilly
"Y ddwy yn credu taw ty di lladdws William Roger at ty di lladdws ef."
in English:-
"I do believe that thou didst murder William Roger and thou didst murder him."

1766 Glamorgan
speaker from Welsh St. Donat's; at Llandaff
"Mi glywas taw Twm mab Thomas Shon oedd y gwr y nidws y gasseg."
in English:-
"I heard that it was Tom the son of Thomas John was the man that leaped the mare."

* * * * *

1714 Llandaff
speaker from St. Nicholas; at St. Nicholas
" ... tydi a ddygws fy jeir i ..."
In English:-
" ... thou hast stole my hens."

1719 Llandaff
speaker from Newton Nottage; at Newton Nottage
"Kera, kera i dre at dy dad y ddwgws y pack sane."
in English:-
"Goe, goe home to thy father that stole the pack of stockins."

1722 Llandaff
speaker from Llancarfan; at Llancarfan
"Y laddronas y spylws blaud Mr. St. John ar kavan."
in English:-
" ... theife, that stole Mr. St. John's meal from the trow (trough)."

1731 Llandaff
speaker from Llantwit-juxta-Neath; at ?
"Yr whore fach, yr whore boeth, y laddws ei phlentyn cyntaf yn y gwelu."
in English:-
" ... ye hott or burnt whore that killed here first child in bed."

* * * * *

1705 Archdeaconry of Brecon
speaker from Trallwng; at Trallwng
"Nid oedd ganhi *portiwn gogyfer call gwr * ond y enillws hi ar ei phen ôl."
in English:-
"She had no/money to buy clothes/*thing to portion her * but what she got upon her hind parte."

1711 Archeaconry of Brecon
 speaker from Llandyfaelog; at Llandyfaelog or Brecon
 "... ag hi findws i gwr rhwng coese Rachel gwraig David Thomas ag yno hi dunnws i
 gwr wrth wallt i ben or rhwng dwy coes Rachel."
 in English:-
 "... and she found her husband betwixt the legs Rachel David Thomas wife and there
 she pulled her husband by the hair of the head from betwixt the legs of Rachel."

1726 Archdeaconry of Brecon
 speaker from Glascwm; at Gladestry
 "Di girm di dorrws y twlle sydd in di hatt ti."
 in English:-
 "Thy horns did break the holes that is in thy hatt."

* * * * *

1688 Archdeaconry of Carmarthen
 speaker from Llanddeusant; at Llanddeusant
 "fe ddwgws gwan oddywrth ynhy fy, a fe nodus defayd ag a cedwys nhwy ..."
 in English:-
 "... he stole my chickings from my howse, and he marked sheepe and kept them ..."

1781 Archdeaconry of Carmarthen
 speaker from Llangiwig; at Llangiwig
 "Fe dy cnochws dee ar y dowlad."
 in English:-
 "Hopkin John fucked you on the hayloft."

Forms with -odd

1652 Anglesey
 speaker from Penmynydd; at Beaumaris
 "Dymmar witch a witchiodd fyngwartheg am lloie i er ys dwy fflynedd yn myned
 heibio."
 in English:-
 "Here is ye witch that bewitched my cowes and calves these two yeares passing by."

1731 Anglesey
 speaker from ? ; at Trefdraeth
 "... fe a ddygodd oen or morfa."
 in English:-
 "... he stole a lamb out of the marsh."

* * * * *

1709 Caernarfonshire
 speaker from Llanddeiniolen; at Dinlle
 "... efe a ddygodd deugain om defaid i yn lledrad."
 in English:-
 "... he stole fourty of my sheep."

- 1795 Caernarfonshire
 speaker from ? ; at Conway
 "Do, 'fe ddygodd ddafad oddiar Huwcyn Jones Ty Pitsh, ac 'fe fagodd y ddafad honno oen du iddo ef."
 in English:-
 "Yes, he stole a sheep of Hugh Jones of Ty Pitch, and that sheep bred him a black lamb."
- 1827 Caernarfonshire
 speaker from Betws y Coed; at Caernarfon
 "... fe gafodd goed gan Sir Watkin i repario ac fe ai dygodd ac ei llifiodd yn goed hwsmonaeth."
 in English:-
 "... he had timber from Sir Watkin to repair and he stoled them and sawed them for the purposes of husbandry."
- * * * * *
- 1604 Denbighshire
 speaker from ? : at Wrexham
 "... ag a fy benna witch ar a troidodd daiar irioed."
 In English:-
 "... and hath bene the chiefeste witch that ever did treade the grownde."
- 1652 Denbighshire
 speaker from Llanfwrog; at Ruthin
 "Y hi a wenwynodd fy mab i ..."
 in English:-
 "Shee did poyson my son ..."
- 1756 Denbighshire
 speaker from ? : at Abergele
 "... fe a ddygodd llo a maharen."
 in English:-
 "... he stole a calfe and a ram."
- 1769 Denbighshire
 speaker from ? ; at Ruthin
 "Yr oeddwn i yn mynd i Gaer riw forey a dyma ddyn yn croes'r ffordd, ag wrth ddwad adre mi groesodd y ffordd ynghulch yr un fan ag a neidiodd i ffrwyn fy ngheffyll ag fe ddweydodd, 'Myn Diawl, gwalch os misies i chiw y borey, ni fisies i monochwi yrwan' ..."
 in English:-
 "I was going to Chester one morning and a man crossed the road, and as I returned home he crossed the road about the same place and he leaped to my horse's bridle and he said, 'By the devil, if I missed you in the morning, I have not missed you now' ..."

1776 Denbighshire
speaker from ? ; at Llanrhaeadr
"Y mae Owen Williams yn lleidr defaid, y fo ai cneifiodd nhw ag ai marciodd
nhw ..."
in English:-
"Owen Williams is a stealer of sheep, he sheared them and marked them."

* * * * *

1623 Flintshire
speaker from ? ; at Cilcain
" ... fo a dynge na chododd haul pe kae ef ddim am i boen."
in English:-
" ... he wold sweare that the sonne did nev[er] rise if he might gaine eny thinge for
[his own] the same."

1732 Flintshire
speaker from ? ; at St. Asaph
"Y hi a fiscarriodd yn nhŷ Mr. Williams o fastard neu blentyn orderch cin i phriodi o
achos dose o bysagwriaeth a gymerodd hi, ag hi a dwyedodd ef ei hun yn fy
nglwyaid i."
in English:-
"That she miscarried in Mr. Williams's house of a bastard child before she was
married occasioned by a dose of phisick which she took and she spoke t herself in
my hearing."

1823 Flintshire
speaker from ? ; at Mold
"William Thomas a fwrddodd Robert Lloyd o'r Plasnewydd."
in English:-
"William Thomas murdered Robert Lloyd of Plasnewydd."

* * * * *

1635 Montgomeryshire
speaker from ? ; at Llanwnnog
" ... ac efe a dyngodd yn anudon yn ferbyn i ym Llwdlo."
in English:-
" ... and he did p/er/iure himself against me in Ludlowe."

1641 Montgomeryshire
speaker from ? ; at Llanllugan
"... y fo a forgiodd fond rhwng Oliver Rees a Sion ap Hugh."
in English:-
" ... hee hath forged a bond betweene Oliver Rees and John ap Hugh."

1655 Montgomeryshire
speaker from ? ; at Welshpool
"Fo aeth Jane Roberts at wraige y nayler i fod yn midwife iddi hi ag a dynodd i
fwding hi allan ag hi a drigodd dan i llaw hi."
in English:-
"Jane Roberts went to the nayler's wife to be her midwife and shee did pull her
gutts out and shee did die under her hands ..."

1662 Montgomeryshire
speaker from ? ; at Welshpool
" ... ag hi a witchodd fywch Ester Tilley."
in English:-
" ... and she hath bewitched Ester Tilley's cow."

* * * * *

1650 Cardiganshire
speaker from ? ; at Aberystwyth
" ... oblegid y llyfyr y kyhoyddodd foe yn erbyn y Brenin yn achose y parlim[en]t ...]
in English:-
" ... concerneinge the booke that hee published ag[ains]t the Kinge in the behalfe of
ye Parliament ..."

* * * * *

1631 Pembrokeshire
speaker from ? ; at Cilrhedyn
" ... ag fo a ddigodd mharen oddyar Mr. Henry Lloyd."
in English:-
" ... and he did steale a weather from Mr. Harry Lloyd."

1634 Pembrokeshire
speaker from ? ; at St. David's
" ... he y a agoradd drws yn tu y ag a ddogodd ym purse, ym gwrogis, ym hallwedd,
am arian y."
in English:-
" ... she did open the doore of my howse and did steale my purse, my girdle, my key
and my monie."

1778 Pembrokeshire
speaker from St. Dpgmael's; at ?
"Dwgodd eich mister chi ychen o ffair Mathry."
in English:-
"[Your master] stole oxen from Mathry fair."

1796 Pembrokeshire
speaker from Fishguard; at Fishguard
"Fe fy Martha gwriag John David yn cysgu gyda modrib a fy; y gododd y lawr o'r
gwely ag y agorodd fox mamgu a ddwgodd shugr candy o honof, a'g ath lawr y'r
shop mamgu ag y ddwgodd ddau geiniog; ag y ddwgodd gorn o gatgut, hancichers
o shop Mortmer, a penniff o shop Martha David."

in English:-

"Martha, the wife of John David, slept with my aunt and self; and got down from the bed and opened my grandmother's box and stole thereout sugar candy, and went down to the shop of my grandmother and stole two pence; and she stole a piece of catgut, handkerchiefs from Mortimer's shop, and a penknife from the shop of Martha David."

1821 Pembrokeshire

speaker from Nevern; at Nevern

"Fe dorodd Shon Salmon pren yn cwed David Nicholas ac ai carriodd e bant ar hyd nos."

... "Shon Salmon y mashwn a ddywreiddiodd y pren."

in English:-

"He had cut a tree in the wood of David Nicholas and carried it away in the night time."

... "John Salmon the mason uprooted the tree."

* * * * *

1716 Glamorgan

speaker from ? ; at Cardiff

"Y fe dyngodd anudon ar achos Morgan John."

in English:-

"He perjured himselfe upon Morgan John's acc[oun]t."

* * * * *

1718 Llandaff

speaker from Bedwellte; at Bedwellte

"... ag y fostiodd ag y ddywedodd Shon Ffrawnsis hyn wrthto i ..."

in English:-

"... & John Francis has told and boasted of it to me ..."

1729 Llandaff

speaker from Llangattock Lingoed; at Llangattock Lingoed

"... ah fy gwnnodd yr hen fawd ei mam hi o'ei gwelu ei rhoi lle i chwi."

in English:-

"... and the old bawd her mother rose out of her bed to give you room."

* * * * *

1755 Archdeaconry of Brecon

speaker from Llanfeugan; at Llanfeugan

"Shonnet Thomas confessodd wrth i fi bod plentyn idde hi o dy wrth pheirad gar law."

in English:-

"That the party agent confessed to the said Sarah that she had a child by a neighbouring clergyman."

* * * * *

1682 Archdeaconry of Carmarthen

speaker from Llandingad; at Llandingad

"Fe ddallodd William David Elizabeth y wraige yn y gwely gyda John Fortescue."
in English:-

"Elizabeth to be a whore and had committed the great sin of adultery with the said
John Fortescue or at least wise intended soe to doe ..."

1834 Archdeaconry of Carmarthen

speaker from Carmarthen; at Carmarthen

"... ac yfe a rhoddodd y pox i ti ..."
in English:-

"... and he gave you the pox ..."

Appendix B

Map 1, Sixteenth Century

Denbighshire:	1. Wrexham, one not located
Montgomeryshire:	four not located
Radnorshire:	1. Llanbister, 2. Colwyn
Breconshire:	1. Defynnog
Glamorgan:	1. Swansea, 2. Ewenni, 3. Splott

Map 2, Seventeenth Century

Anglesey:	1. Beaumares, three not located.
Denbighshire:	1. Llangernyw, 2. Llanrwst, 3. Denbigh, 4. Llewenni, 5. Gwaunynog, 6. Segrwyd, 7. Ruthin, 8. Wrexham, 9. Bersham, two not located.
Flintshire:	1. Brynbichan, 2. Trelawnyd, 3. Mostyn, 4. Mertyn, 5. Flint, 6. Cilcain, 7. Northop, 8. Wepre, 9. Mold, 10. Argoed, two not located.
Montgomeryshire:	1. Trederwen, 2. Welshpool, 3. Llanllugan, 4. Llanwnog, 5. Newtown, two not located.
Cardiganshire:	1. Aberystwyth, 2. Llanbadarn Fawr, 3. Troedyr, one not located.
Radnorshire:	1. Llangunllo, 2. Llanbadarn Fawr, 3. Preseigne, 4. Llanellwedd, 5. Colfa, 6. Gladestry, 7. Llanbedr, 8. Boughrood.
Pembrokeshire:	1. St. David's, 2. Mathri, 3. Llanwnda, 4. Llanllawer, 5. Llysyfrân, 6. Newport, 7. Nevern, 8. Eglwyswrrw, 9. Cilgerran.
Carmarthenshire:	1. Llandingad, 2. Llanddeusant, 3. Llangendeyrn, 4. Llandyfaelog.
Glamorgan:	1. Neath, 2. Ystradowen, 3. St. Fagan's, 4. Llandaf, 5. Llanedern, 6. Cardiff, one not located.

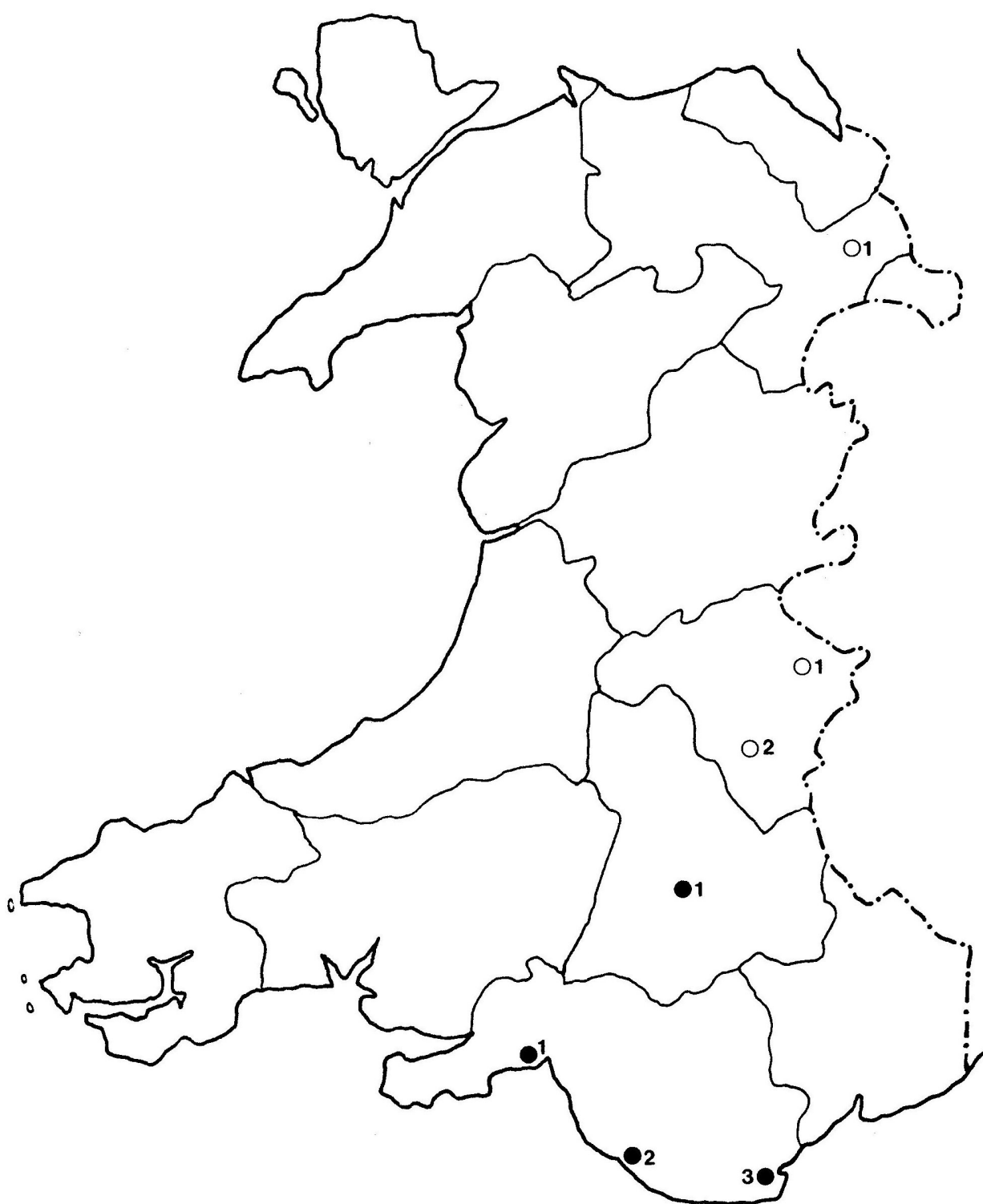
Map 3, Eighteenth Century

Anglesey:	1. Holyhead, 2. Trefdraeth, 3. Llanidan, 4. Penmynydd, two not located.
Caernarfonshire:	1. Llysfaen, 2. Dinlle, 3. Caernarfon, 4. Llanfairisgaer, 5. Bangor, 6. Conway.
Denbighshire:	1. Llanellidan, 2. Abergele, 3. Betws Abergele, 4. Llanefydd, 5. Llansannan, 6. Denbigh, 7. Llanrhaeadr, 8. Ruthin, 9. Wrexham, 10. Llangollen, 11. Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant, one not located.

Flintshire:	1. St. Asaph, 2. Tremeirchion, 3. Holywell, 4. Flint, 5. Cilcain, 6. Northop, 7. Mold, two not located.
Radnorshire:	1. Cwmdeuddwr, 2. Gladestry.
Breconshire:	1. Trallwng, 2. Brecon, 3. Llanfrynach, 4. Cathedin, 5. Llanfeugan, 6. Ystradfellte.
Pembrokeshire:	1. Fishguard, 2. Newport, 3. Nevern, 4. Meline, 5. Roch, 6. Haverfordwest, one not located.
Carmarthenshire:	1. Llanelli.
Glamorgan:	1. Merthyr Tudful, 2. Llangiwig, 3. Swansea, 4. Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, 5. Neath, 6. Margam, 7. Aberafan, 8. Llangynwyd, 9. Llanwonno, 10. Newcastle, 11. Coety, 12. Eglwysilan, 13. Caerphilly, 14. Newton Nottage, 15. Corntown, 16. Llantrisant, 17. St. Brides Major, 18. Cowbridge, 19. Llancarfan, 20. Bonvilston, 21. St. Nicholas, 22. Michaelston-super-Ely, 23. Llandaff, 24. Cardiff, two not located.
Monmouthshire:	1. Abergavenny, 2. Llangattock Lingoed, 3. Trevethin, 4. Bedwellte, 5. Pengam, 6. Michaelston-y-Vedw.

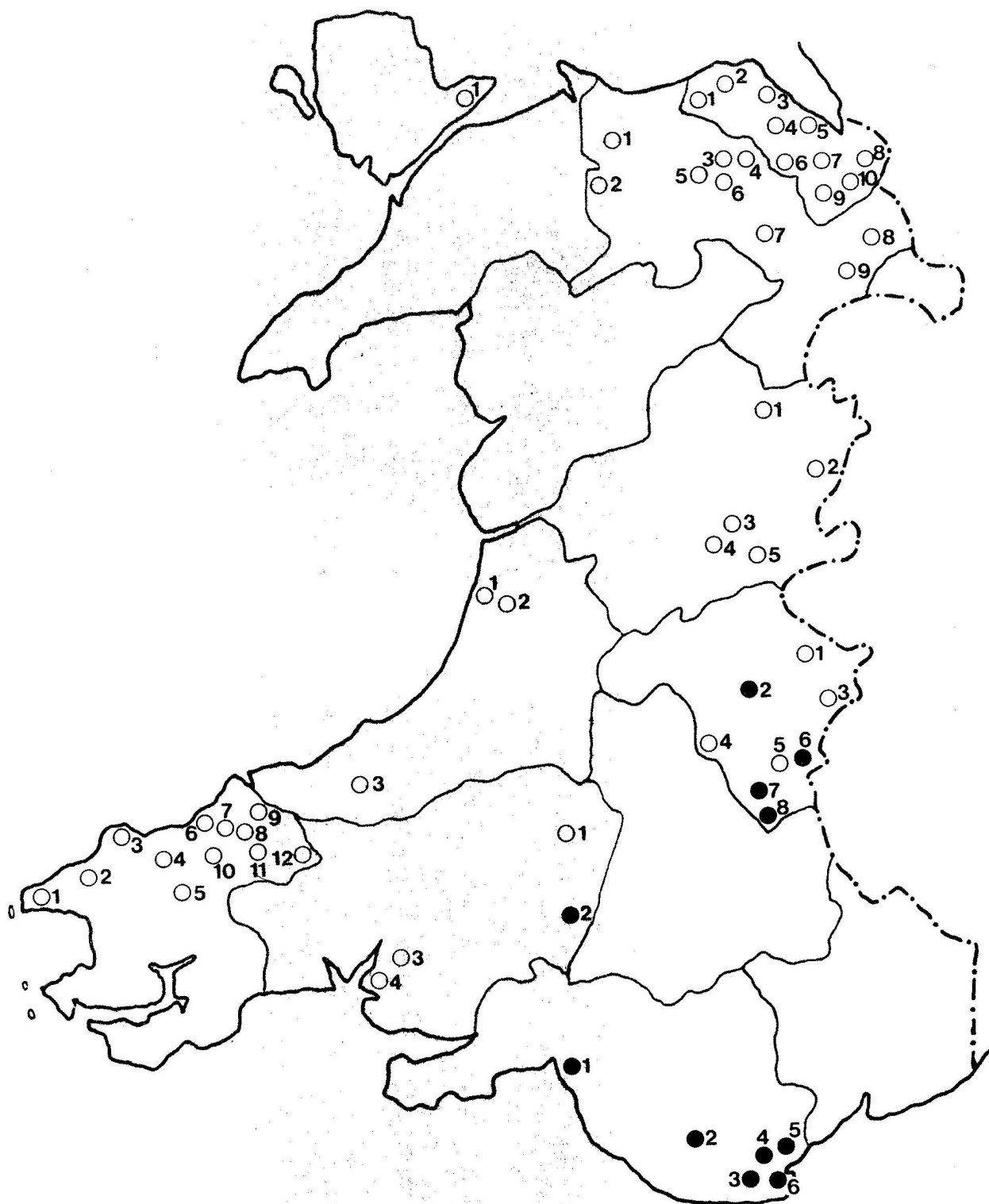
Map 4, Nineteenth Century

Caernarfonshire:	1. Pistill, 2. Caernarfon, 3. Llanrhos.
Flintshire:	1. Holywell, 2. Mold.
Pembrokeshire:	1. Newport, 2. Nevern, 3. Cilrhedyn, 4. Narberth, one not located.
Carmarthenshire:	1. Carmarthen.



Map 1
Sixteenth Century

○ -odd
● -ws

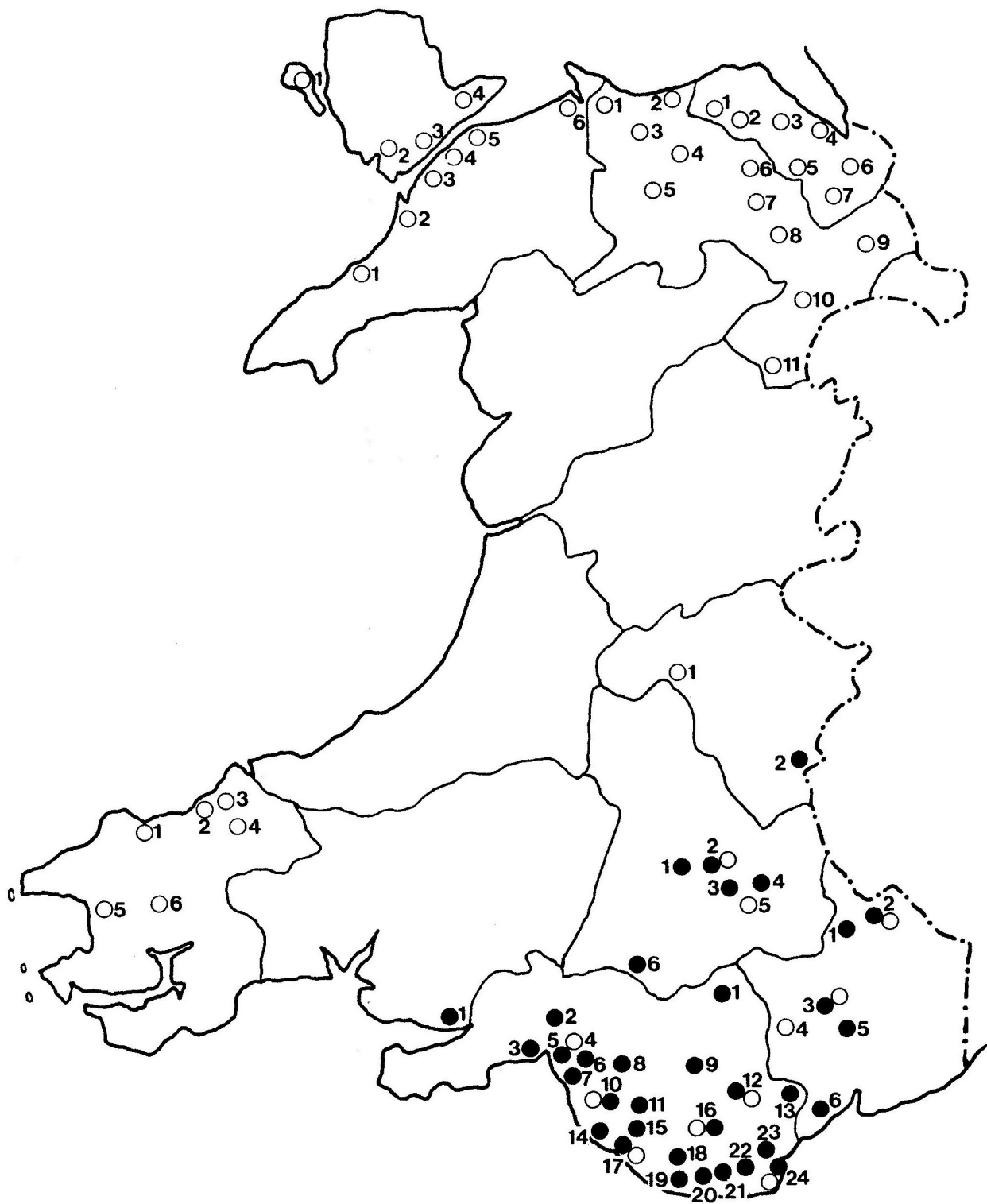


Map 2

Seventeenth Century

○ -odd

● -ws

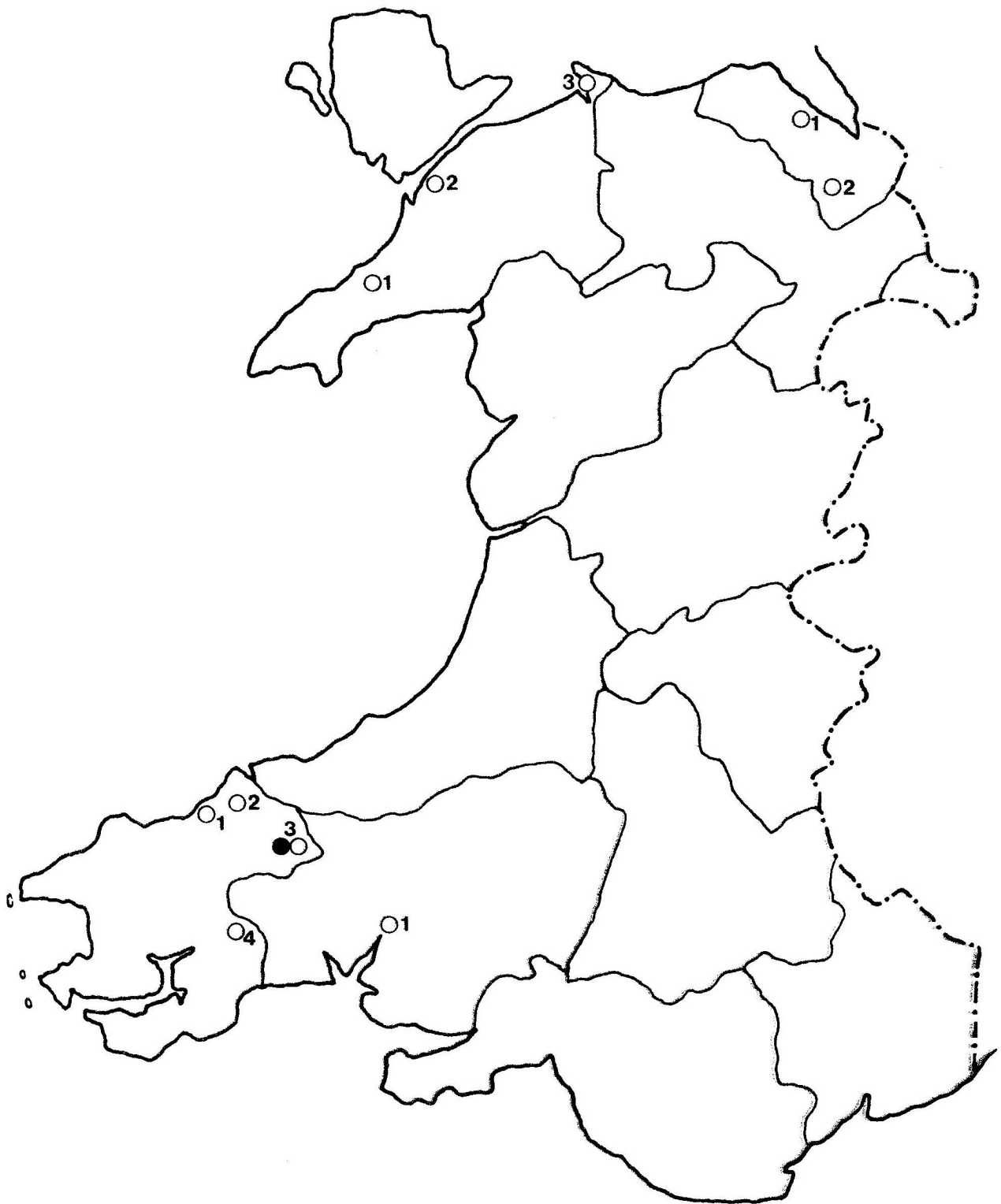


Map 3

Eighteenth Century

○ -odd

● -ws



Map 4

Nineteenth Century

○ -odd

● -ws