**Comment from the Author, "Information on the 13th Century Welsh, newly retold; for all interested readers."**

# NEWES OF þe (knowne) WORLDE

**Issue Number XIII.B revised** **For Circa 1265** **Dateline August the 4th 1265.**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE. Troops of Cymru. Allies & Foes.

To rationalise what Welsh troops would have been like during this period, one can obviously, only sift through the known records. There are good accounts of their general fighting style and the outcomes of battles - the victories or defeats that were the result. There are also snippets and fragments of tales – which would nowadays be termed as hearsay – but these are still useful, because they provide additional background, (even if, possibly exaggerated) about the use of weaponry such as bows. In truth the Welsh fighting man has often been overlooked because of the lack of main-stream popular history commentators. Medieval authors focused on people deemed to be pious, famous, or those who would more readily help pay the writer's bills.
Thus, now, there are many books about King Edward I, and barely any about Welshmen. However, my brief compilation has arrived at a set of descriptions which seem to form a continuous "average" if you like, of the clothes and equipment they used fairly constantly, right up to, and slightly after, the absorption of Gwallia under the jurisdiction of the Crown by Edward I.

A lightly armed Welsh foot soldier, rough & ever ready to fight. Deadly on his own ground.

# Men's Day Clothes 1250 - 1270
## Welsh styles

For the normal Welshman Day clothes as such, were the every-day garments he lived in. (It is recorded that they were also the ones often slept in as well.)
These over layers were used by those who could afford them, & came in many styles. The types shown here are based upon written descriptions & the Welsh law book of Hywel-Dda. Peniarth 28, dated from 1225 - 1280 latest.

Woolen garments were sometimes lined around the necklines & cuffs with smooth linens or braids. to add decoration & enhance comfort.

Welsh Day clothes were worn by men of all ranks The main distinction being the colours worn. Vertical-Partie-coloured surcoats are shown on noblemen & their household men.

Sleeves are depicted often as being quite baggy up towards the shoulder, tapering down to narrower cuffs. There is no reason to believe that inset sleeves were unknown. Contact with England and the Continent was frequent. Garments of that type are known from archaeological finds in Europe.

Woolen cloth was available in numerous weaves, qualities and colours. Welsh cloth was often woven using colours & patterns according to local custom.

Shoes are outdoor wear draw-laced type.
A Welsh pattern.

Long Tunic with Welsh neckline & side splits. Hitched over belt - Welsh style.

Long Tunic with front vent. worn with surcoat or sleeveless tunic over. - Marcher / Welsh style.

Historically, it was often the case that Welsh men , women & children went barefoot. No stigma attached to not wearing or owning shoes.

However, it must be noted that persons un-used to this practice do not have the same hardiness to the soles of the feet. Going barefoot is a risky business & is not recommended!

# Clothes of the 13th Century Circa 1265

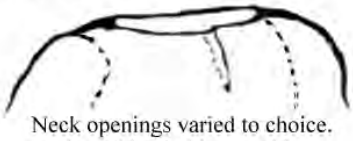
## General wear day-to-day  Welsh Tunics & Shirts

Male tunics were made up, cut-out from wool cloth and mostly sewn together with linen thread. The quality of the cloth used was dependent upon the buying power of the owner and thus varied immensely. Expensive cloth was hard wearing and rain resistant.
Bindings of linen or silk were sometimes added to the neck opening to give a less harsh edge. Neckline shapes varied according to district or personal preference.

Male undershirts were made up, cut out from linen cloth, sewn together with linen thread. The whiteness of the cloth depended upon the time taken to finish a long expensive bleaching process.

Linen shirts may be made using the same pattern type as woollen tunics

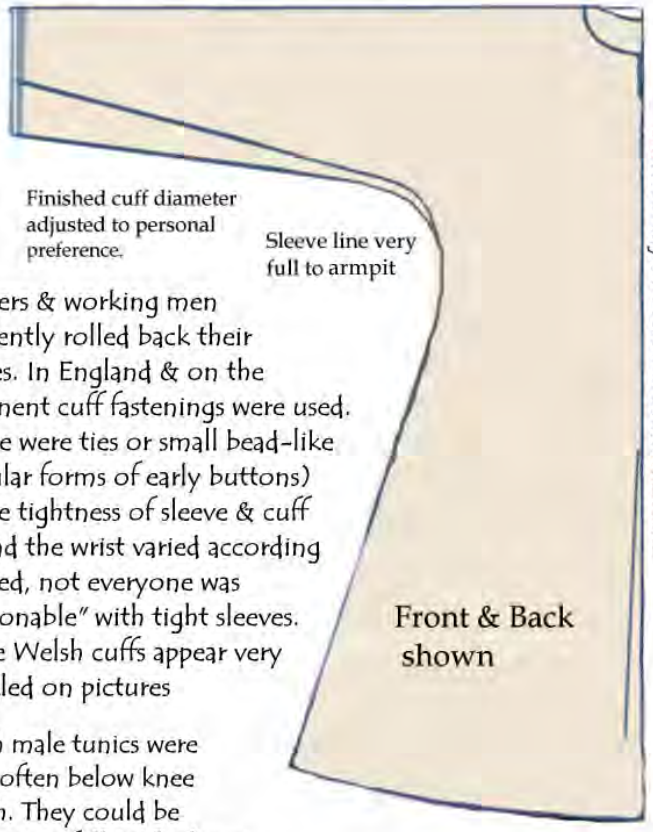
To the west of Britain, Welsh or marcher neckline openings were mostly rounded with a small "v" slit.



Neck openings varied to choice. And an older fashion used in the Northwest of England was a simple slit type. Although this was varied by adding a vertical frontal slit which overlapped when closed with a small brooch.

Allow enough margin for getting the tunic on easily. The bulk of the hair and any coif (if worn) should be considered.
Edged cloth has very little "give".

N.B. Check measurement
Length from side of neck to wrist -with arm down by side.




Hunters & working men frequently rolled back their sleeves. In England & on the continent cuff fastenings were used. (These were ties or small bead-like globular forms of early buttons) As the tightness of sleeve & cuff around the wrist varied according to need, not everyone was "fashionable" with tight sleeves. I note Welsh cuffs appear very wrinkled on pictures

Welsh male tunics were most often below knee length. They could be made more full to the lower parts by adding tringular panels (gores) at the front opening or down the side seams below belt level.
The tunics of military men or riders were often split both front & rear to allow more movement.

## Welsh Male Tunic Circa 1265

# Cymric Men – Allies & Foes - Normal clothing.

Undershirts: These were long sleeved, made of linen cloth, having a rounded neck-opening with slight frontal "v" slit. Shirt colours varied according to the time spent on the bleaching process, varying from brown, light brown, or off-white, to white. Dyed versions were known, e.g. woad produced a light blue, madder a series of reds, onion skins & tansy yellows. The colour range varied greatly. If "un-fixed" they washed out again fairly quickly. Most shirts were left un-dyed.

Tunics: Woollen tunics were a long sleeved generously proportioned, knee-length type. Versions were made with, or without, a front vent or side slits, according to personal preference. Additionally, long sleeved calf length, or full-length woollen tunics, with front vents or side slits & neck opening as noted above, were also commonly worn. (See previous drawings.)

Long simple surcoats of woollen or linen cloth, again having a rounded neckline with a slight frontal "V" slit, and with either front & rear, or side slits, were worn as day-clothes over tunics. (Even without armour.) These are clearly shown in single colours or two coloured, divided down the vertical centreline. E.g. Red and white. Green and white. Green and cream. Thus we can deduce they had central front sewn seams. These surcoats are also shown pulled up and rolled-over what seem to be ornately decorated belts. In effect, they hitched them up in order to shorten the length when they needed to. This seems to have been both a Welsh and a Marcher fashion statement of the 1260's. As it was not commonly done throughout the rest of England.

Braies: A knee-length form of trouser, similar to Roman bracae. Less baggy in appearance than the English costume version. With a tighter fit to the legs – it was a variety that used less cloth. Linen, woollen, or even linen-lined, soft leather versions were made.

Hose: In the 1260's, these were the separate leg type made of woollen cloth 'cut on the cross' (bias cut.) they tied up to a waistbelt and were worn over the braies. An expensive item not frequently in use by poorer Welsh. They rapidly became tattered moving through rough undergrowth - unless lower leg protection was used. Generally used by the upper classes as a mark of wealth, but any man could wear them. "Stirrup" versions, (mostly without heels or toe coverings,) were also made. Ankle hose: Were a form of hose without feet extension coverings, worn by unshod men. Welsh also wore shorter, knee high, garter-tied forms of the above.

Cloaks: Came in all sizes. Medium, short and full length, according to status of wearer. These were commonly worn every day. When in combat or moving through woodland they seem to have been tightly rolled in a tube-like fashion & wrapped around the body to provide extra protection against arrows and blows. Square and rectangular types were typical, although semi-circular and elliptical pattern versions were used. It was down to personal preference.
Most decent types were made of good woollen cloth. Hand woven woollen "flokati" or "roggvarfeldr" types copied from Norwegian contacts in the past were less prevalent in the 1260's, but were still made and used. They had woven tufts linked in amongst the main weave – giving a hairy, but warm surface. Less sophisticated versions were of sheepskins or oiled soft leathers. Expensive versions were fullered woollen cloth, almost felted and pretty weatherproof. For the very wealthy such day-cloaks were lined with tailored additional furs such as rabbit, squirrel etc. The poorest versions were almost of no use, being very thin, but could still display "clan" colours.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their clothing.

## Men's Day Clothes 1250 - 1270
## Welsh styles

A prosperous man's Working clothes. Linen undershirt, knee-length tunic. Short over tunic Side and / or front vents..

Sheep-skin cape with central neck hole & front slit. Welsh style.

This man also wears a type of cropped trouser, just below knee-length in style. They could have been linen, fine wool or even soft suede leather. They are a much less voluminous version of English braies.

These shoes are a soft leather type with added undersoles. They make use of a drawstring to shape them. Possibly a simplified version of late Roman sandals or calligae.

Shoes are indoor wear toggle-fastened type.

Day-clothes worn hitched over belt. Neckline with side gore inserts & slit opening to front fastened by small Annular brooch. Front vent.. -Marcher & Welsh style.

Picture based upon the margin sketch in Littere Wallie. N.A. E36/274 London. Treaty of Montgomery 1267.

Shoes are outdoor wear draw-laced type.
A Welsh pattern.

Woven wool-cloth cloak having a typical Cymric pattern. A late version of Gallic-British tartan or muted chequered pattern.

This is a commonly worn mid-length tunic style. It lacks a front vent or side splits. Hitched up over a waist belt, in this instance it covers to just below the knees. Welsh / Marcher fashion.

Scurrilous cartoons show Welsh archers wearing this type of clothing - and show a man wearing only a single left shoe and possibly only a single hose.

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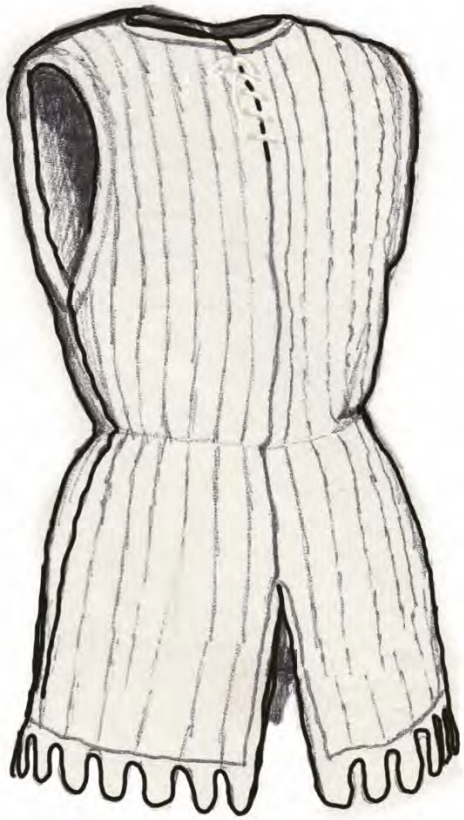
# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes. Light body armour.

## SHORT SOFT BODY ARMOUR
## WELSH STYLE CIRCA 1265

Circa 1265



The lower edges of high-class leather faced versions, were sometimes "dagged" as shown here.

### General observations:

Firm stuffing transmits more of a blow through to the target & is much heavier. Although, the firm version slows down the penetration of an arrow a little better at long range. Longbow arrows with bodkin heads or crossbow bolts usually pierce all versions according to our tests. Soft stuffing absorbs the power of the blow and reduces the weight considerably.

Many leather armours were fastened down the left-hand side from armpit to hip. Closed by toggles or thonging. This short Welsh variant may easily have been of the same type. Making it easier to don. There are no surviving examples in the archaeological record.

It was remarked that the welsh used very little in the way of specialised military equipment. However, shortened versions of padded armour used by enemy troops would have become known. The shorter waist length types were worn with a separate thick leather belt which covered the stomach.
Hip length versions were usually slit to lower front and rear to allow ease of leg movement.
Neck openings varied, but would have been rounded with a front slit. Closed by toggles or thonging.

Yet more variants were faced with outer layers of soft leather. These are usually described as being "gamboised". The word gambeson apparantly is the name for the leather -faced item. Today the names aketon or gambeson are interchangeable.

Comprised of either wool-cloth and / or linen layers stuffed with un-carded wool.
The padding can be stuffed into each vertically aligned tube seperately, and then sewn shut,
or it can be sewn down as a layer onto the backing cloth & then covered with the front piece and quilted to hold it all in place afterwards.

There can be little doubt that a typical Welsh version of this body armour would be to cut and sew tanned sheepskins to make up a similar item.
Worn with the wool to the internal face, only seams would need to be sewn together. In effect it would be a sheepskin body-jacket.
As worn by shepherds.

Rear view of neckline

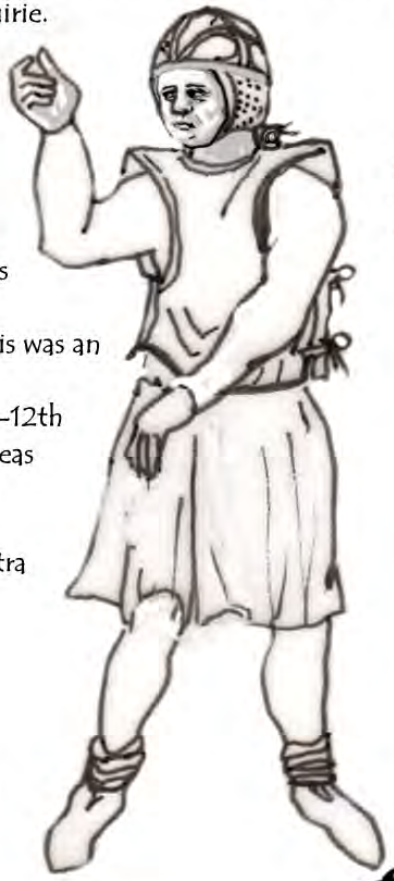
layering

Typical pattern
1/4 shown

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their equipment.

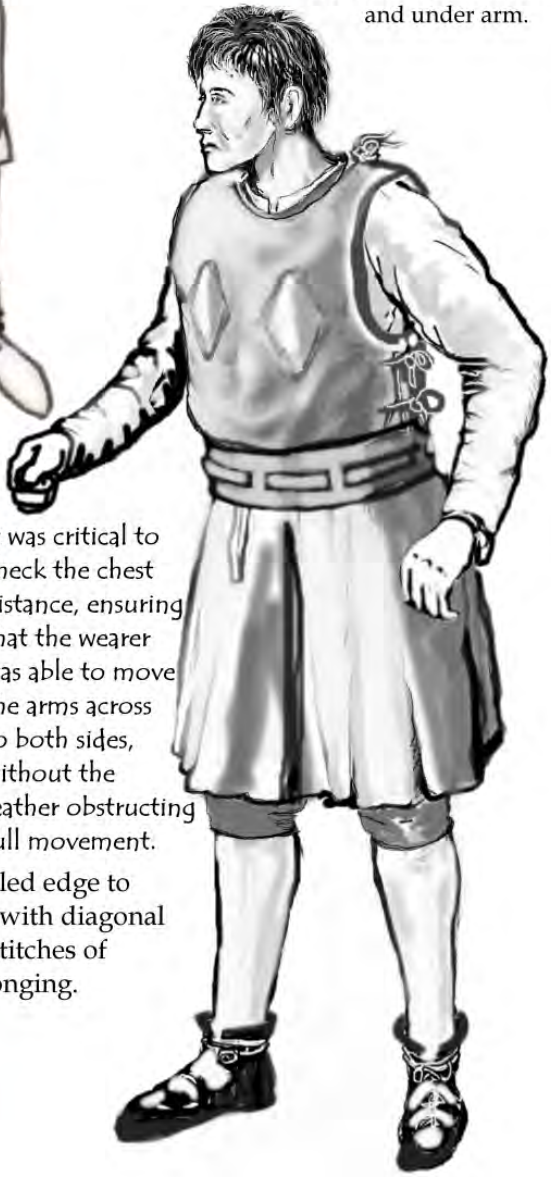
## Clothes of the 13th Century Circa 1265

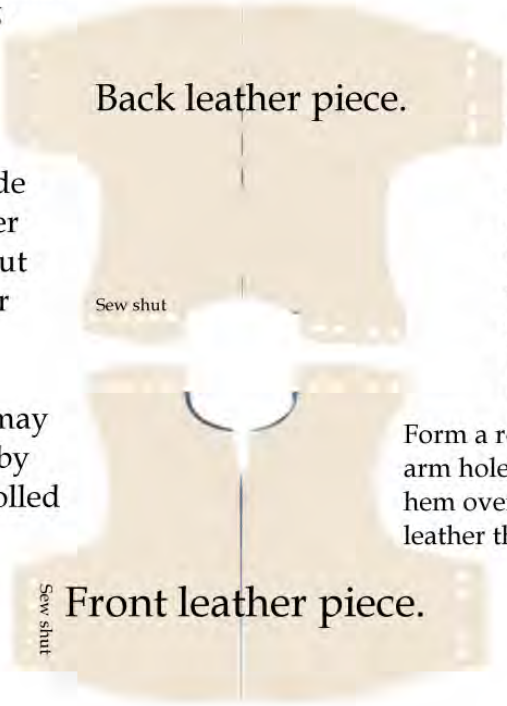
Welsh forms of the leather cuirie. Some were made of supple leather. Others had a layer of thicker leather stitched inside the front piece. They were waist length & could also have plates of thick leather, thin latten-brass or horn plates used as added protection over the lungs. This was an old-fashioned armour type, more widely used in the 11th -12th Centuries, in Welsh & Irish areas It was an affordable type of lightweight protection. The stomach area was given extra armour by wearing a thick tanned-leather waist belt. (As shown on the right hand figure.) Front leather piece overlaps back leather piece at the top left (wearers) shoulder and left hand side. These are tied shut after donning the cuirie.



Check neck hole size! Ensure the wearer is able to use it in conunction with any other armour to be worn.

Tied shut on shoulder and under arm.






Opposite side and shoulder are sewn shut with leather thonging.

Arm holes may be finished by forming a rolled tube edge.

It was critical to check the chest distance, ensuring that the wearer was able to move the arms across to both sides, without the leather obstructing full movement.

Form a rolled edge to arm holes with diagonal hem overstitches of leather thonging.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their equipment.

For the commonest 13th century types of typical equipment used in Welsh speaking areas:- These are the Welsh variations noted below. (Please refer to drawings for general appearance.)

Body armour: Padded Aketons / Gambesons were often a shorter version of those commonly used by English opponents. They were - more often than not, vertically quilted, and lightly stuffed with wool or horse hair. (Goat's hair could have been used, but it has a very strong smell.) The outer layers being made up of linen or woollen cloth. Lighter versions were sleeveless or had laced-up detachable sleeves. Gambesons were soft-leather-faced types of the above article.

Occasionally these must have been like earlier short, waist length, traditional Welsh and Irish versions which are shown having a lozenge-shaped reinforcement plate attached to the outer face over each breast. (These plates being made of either thin iron, latern-brass, bronze or horn.) The cleaned horn was boiled for a time until it became pliable, after which it was crushed flat and cut into sheets. It can be sawn, flaked into layers, filed and drilled; or holes can be burnt through it, using a pointed red-hot iron rod. (Although the smell is somewhat of an acquired taste, for those not used to it.) Medium or thinner thicknesses give fair impact protection without a large increase in weight. *Thick* horn plates, being quite heavy, were made much smaller or used only very sparingly, and placed over strategic vital organs, such as the heart area.
Horn plate reinforcement could be regularly used by the Welsh, because they had ample supplies of cattle to provide the horn, and naturally, the leather to make up jackets, jerkins and corselets. Because of this latter factor they could easily locally manufacture various versions of flexible soft-leather armours. Tunic types were about knee length, and split at the front or sides to aid movement. Types used were long, or short-sleeved, to owners preference. Some may even have had dagged edges, on the lower edge and short sleeves, of that variety.

Leather Cuiries, as shown on the previous pages were specific military items, worn over other layers. Worn by the Welsh to be visible. (Unlike on English knights.)
An extended note on the latter item: These items could also be reinforced using multi-layering of leather patches, braided leather strips, or interwoven leather strips of raw-hide, or small boiled-leather platelets, with an obvious trade-off of protection for added weight. However, worn with padding underneath, they become effective body armour.

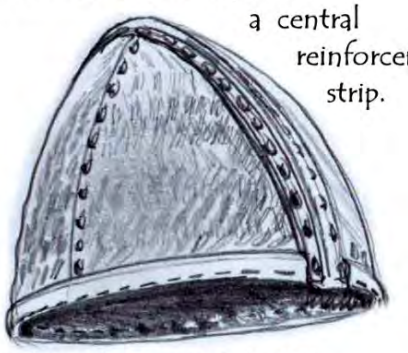
Leather Cuiries. A scale armour variation.
These were very similar to the previous item, but made in the form of a short version of what we now call "scale-armour". This form of defence was regarded as being old-fashioned and barbaric by the Normans and latterly the English of our period. Be that as it may, the multiple layers of the overlapping scales could slow down and stop the deep penetration of an arrow -if you were lucky. Hence its continued use by the Welsh, and men of other nationalities, during siege work.

Moving on, it will come as no surprise that also having a good supply of sheep used for food, it gave most free Welshmen the ability to own a short sheepskin jacket, - sleeveless or otherwise. (Most likely, these were more common than actual military Aketons and if worn with the leather face outwards, when oiled, they could be proof against the wet weather encountered in Wales.)

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their equipment.

For the Welsh headgear was simple. Steel skull-caps with nasal bars, rounded cervelliere type caps, Spangenhelms, or multi-plate constructions with banded iron reinforcements, all were used.

Segmented iron sheet construction with four main domed plates and a central reinforcement strip.



St Trophine cloister (Arles) 1230
A common conical helmet type.

Bernardus Macieuskus / Shah Abbas Bible dated 1245
1245 to 1255. Common conical helmet type.

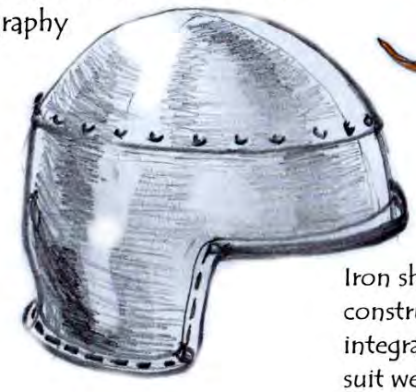
Stake hammered raised iron sheet construction with reinforcement strip and nasal bar to lower edge.

Traditional shape. Simple bowl helmet.
Stake hammered raised sheet construction with reinforcement rib.
Fitted with cheek & neck guards of leather .

Shape known from 650 -1280 iconography, & carvings.
Example West Front (Amiens cathedral) Circa 1230.

Segmented iron sheet construction with front and back domed plates.

Traditional type helmet shape known from 800 -1295 iconography



Shape known from 200 -1295 iconography, finds & carvings.

Iron sheet cooking-bowl type construction with rudimetary integral neck guard. (Sized to suit wearer's choice.)

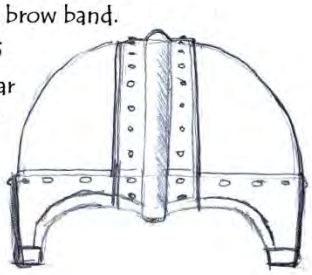
# Typical "traditional" Cymric / old-fashioned bowl style helmets, still current in the 1260's.

# Circa 1265

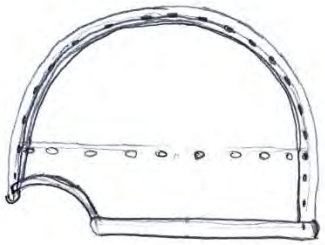
Stake hammered raised iron sheet construction with flared holes above the ear positions. Having soft leather edging to lower front.

Traditional known shape
200 - 1240

Segmented iron sheet twin bowl construction with ribbed central strip & lower shaped brow band.
Psalter of charity 1195
Versions with nasal bar known. (As per early York find.)



Traditional known shape
700 -1327



St Zeno Verona 1290
English Apocalypse 1270

Segmented iron sheet twin side bowl construction with ribbed central strip and ribbed lower brow band

Traditional known shape
400 -1325

Ear piece flare and soft leather neck guard

Shown on this page are the lightweight "unsung traditional" helmet types with a large national spread and long-standing use throughout Europe and the fringes of Britain. - Including Welsh areas, the Scottish isles and parts of Ireland. Usually depicted being worn by lesser infantry. Being cheap, they are *not* types shown on fashionable knightly characters, or normally seen on well-known manuscripts. They *were* common enough to be depicted in church carvings & psalters.
Incidentally, Welsh males were under no *obligation* to wear linen coifs as daily head coverings – it being a matter of personal choice. However, it remains distinctly possible that they may have adopted the use of the *arming-cap*, the military padded version of the coif – to be worn when in combat as additional protection. It would be a certain requirement under any English "Kettle-hat", cervelliere or the up to date 1260's style knight's helm.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their equipment.

Stake raised, single hammered iron sheet construction, with raised central rib over crown. Hammered brow detail above eye position & integral nasal bar.

Example: cast figure on casket, in Limoges style. Circa 1220 - 1240 C.E.

Bowl helmet with nasal bar. Type in common use from 1230 - 1320 C.E.

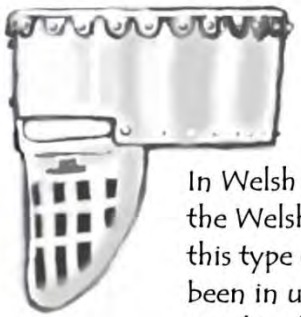
Stake raised, single hammered iron sheet construction, with integral raised ribs to the outer face. Crown with strengthening plate. Bowl with riveted brow band to lower edge.

An expensive, but light, style of helmet relying on the ribbing for rigidity.

Versions known in England France, Spain, Germany and northern Italy.

Ribbed bowl helmet. Type in use from around 1180 to 1400.

Knightly flat topped iron helm with face protection - note, no neck guard. common in England 1180 - 1230 C.E.



In Welsh areas & on the Welsh Marches this type could still have been in use - to lessen weight of equipment.

Circa 1265

For some of the more heavily armoured men, –non archers, Imported / captured English styles including Kettle-type" helmets were also probably used. Some Welsh may well have still been using light- weight Iron helmets with full face protection.(Old-fashioned early-style helms, in effect.) They preferred traditional styles. "Modern" 1260's full helms would have been used by those of the Welsh nobility who could be bothered to be a little more up-to-date in style.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their equipment

Body armour – Mail corselets: Short mail shirts without sleeves, and short mail shirts with short sleeves, were available to -even if, far more rarely used, by Welsh foot troops. Well-equipped household troops and wealthy Welsh knights even deigned to use mail hauberks – with integral mail coifs, long mail sleeves, "the works". How much of this was down to what the modern public of today would call "the wow factor", or "bling" is difficult to assess. On *Welsh* battlefields it was more of an encumbrance than a protection, but mail was still used by those who wished to do so. Mail strips pieces may also have been fastened onto leather tunic-style armours on the outer face of the arms; along the backs of leather hand protection & gloves, & used as helmet neck-guards.

Reinforced surcoats: Another type of armour layer, still considerably lighter than full mail – (when used as an alternative), were also now coming into use. Usually these were the same in appearance as normal sleeveless surcoats. The outer layers were still of heavy linen, but with thin platelets or mail strips sewn down in between them, on the front. (See military surcoat details.)

Arm defences:
Use of sheepskin / leather for bracers to the lower arms a distinct common probability. Although not specifically listed in any period documentation – most perishable, discarded items seldom were –There is a good chance that bracers were used by Welsh foot soldiers and archers alike. Most period types were with a smooth leather face outward over the inner wrist and thin enough so as not to interfere with the actions of using a bow.
Never failing to take advantage of simple lightweight protection, to then stitch or rivet small, thin, plates of horn, laten / brass, or iron to the outer face to help protect the lower arm and outer wrist is not unimaginable.

Even with a correctly spanned bow stave, a bracer is of great help, and is needed particularly by anyone loosing off arrows at a fast rate. Especially so, from awkward shooting positions behind cover, under trees and amongst bushes.. (It avoids severe bruising of the wrist.)

Leg defences:
In a perverse contrast to the above; well-equipped Cymric soldiers had been noted during earlier periods as being unusual in that they continued in the use of metal leg defences. Gerald of Wales again specifically alludes to these items – translated, he calls them "iron greaves". There is however a very good reasoning for this continuity. These are less than a quarter of the weight of mail chausses for the leg and, even when worn with only light hose under them, they are still able to displace the blows of heavy impacts. Hence, their continued popularity with some Welsh.

The common 13th Century form of which (in use in England from the 1250's) was the simple "gutter shaped" version backed with tanned leather.

*N.B. The metal portion covered the front face of the lower leg only*, as distinct from ancient or later varieties which follow the leg form far more closely - and enclose it. More importantly, it is the backing on the item which helps provide most of the shock resistance. These items are secured in place with leather thongs /ties, or rough-edged braided strips, or strips of woollen cloth.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their equipment

In the early 1260's, Iron being costly and difficult to get hold of in Wales, this would probably have led to the making of all-leather versions of the same thing.
(Strangely enough, these are items more commonly associated with knightly use over in Spain. Manufactured in areas such as Cordoba. Where leather hardened by careful boiling in water, was formed into both arm-bracers and leg plates. Then decorated by stamping, engraving & tooling.)

In Welsh areas other lightweight lower leg defences would have been used. Even if they were leg wrappings / puttees, leather strips or simply, rough Welsh boots. Undoubtedly it would have been items such as these, which helped cause their opponents to regard them as being badly equipped and barbaric in looks.
Notes on the previous items. This sort of thing has been in use by fighting men of practically all eras – right up to, and including the present day as an aid in the rush through scrubby brambles undergrowth, etc.

Leather hoods: Made of supple leather which fitted the head closely, these were also used by a few Cymric fighters as an alternative to separate "mail" head coifs. (These versions could be unfastened when not in action. They had ties or toggle fastenings to the front and under the chin, and were fitted enough to enable a helmet to be worn over them.

Short shoulder capes: Made of Sheepskin, goatskin were used as an additional layer against the bad weather. Hooded versions, (without tails to the hood point) are known. (As an aside comment they were also used by *mountain* shepherds in many other regions all across Europe. Where *they* too, were criticised as being "uncivilised", "rough" or far more politely, "quaint").

Indeed critically, many items of Welsh equipment look to be so outside of the normal range when compared with European 13th century gear, that it simply seems wrong! So, If any modern-day reenactors are reading this, they will readily understand, (that amongst other things,) *sheepskins* are unpopular (both with myself )and other living-history reenactors generally, as they try to avoid that certain "cave-man" look so popular with "Hollywood". If that's how these things appear to us, then you can appreciate the reactions from those who weren't Welsh.

Be that as it may, apparently the Welsh fighting-man of the time, really didn't care what English Lords thought about them. They used things which were easy to make, - and still worked!

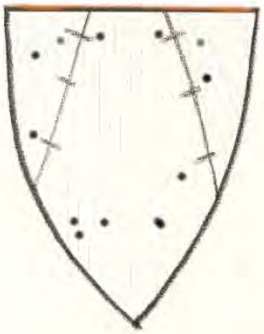
Thus it was *exactly these types of things*, coupled with a basic lack of so-called "proper armour" which made them barbaric in appearance to those who weren't used to seeing them.
In a way, it is the equivalent of a modern fighting man coming up face to face with a veteran soldier straight out of a World-War-One trench. "Odd" he might look, -but he was deadly.
In effect, it seems the Welsh were *so traditional*, they had seemingly become "old-fashioned".

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their Shields

Shields were constructed of wooden planking sometimes pegged and glued together.
The top shield is built of three segments which are then shaved down to the required thickness and sawn and spoke-shaved to shape.
The back is covered with a layer (or layers) of linen, glued into place. Next, the guige, arm strapping & hand grips are added and riveted down into position. The rear padding is now added to suit.

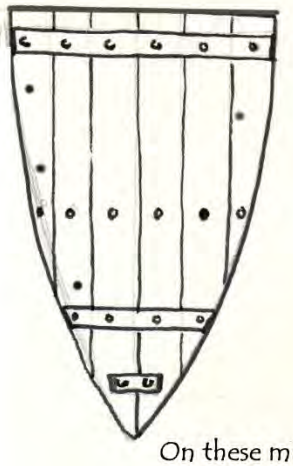
After this the front face may be covered in glued down linen or thin leather. This is also wrapped around the edges and onto the back of the shield. This can also be tacked into place. Full heraldic arms were specific to individuals who had been knighted.
Household / town arms were used, but were more muted in colours or "debased" with borders of a non-heraldic colour. Some were small badge versions.

Typical Welsh shield pattern using subdued colours.



Guiges & arm straps could be placed in numerous positions. Buckles and ties were used for personal adjustment in use.

Plain leather-faced shield.



On these multi-plank versions before any back or facing layers are added strips of iron placed front and back at strategic points on the shield are riveted into place through the wooden boarding to strengthen the shield and maintain its curve.
Building this structure from the central sections, working out to the sides, enables easier construction & bending of the plates & positioning of the rivets in the centres of each plank. Thick strips are not needed. It is the riveting action which pulls the structure together

The number of planks used in the construction varied. 3, 5, 6 and even 7 pieces can be used to achieve the curve required.
Longer & more curved shields were used when approaching or attacking siegeworks / castles. These larger varieties were used by normal foot soldiers. The fully round-topped "kite-shield" had mostly fallen from use. Cutting the top off flatter, lessened the weight.

## Basic shield constructions

## Circa 1265

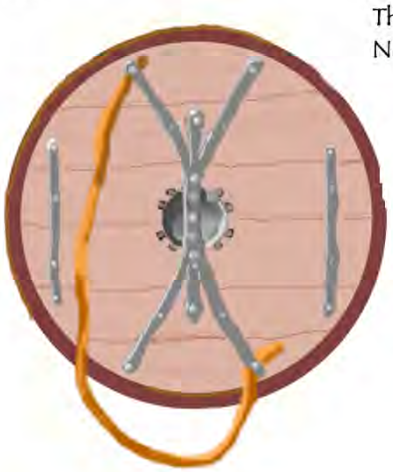
# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their Shields

## Common Shield Types of the Welsh (Traditional Round)

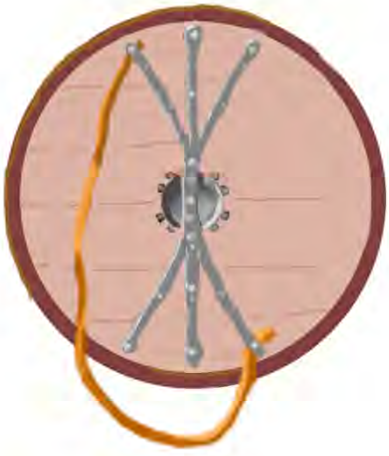
Welsh shields varied according to owner, but were usually medium sized. From around 28" to 22". 710mm to 560mm approx.

Round shields were wooden in construction. The Welsh often kept to traditional types and shapes.
Some were made of thin, flat planking, pegged and glued together, reinforced by metal strips riveted across the back face.
A typical form of this was using three iron strips. These not only formed the hand grip, but also created a "last-ditch" means of defence, should the mass of the main shield surface be cut away.
Grips could be bound over with leather, cord or have wooden parts riveted on over them.

Typical Welsh shield pattern using subdued colours.



Typical Welsh shield pattern using subdued colours.



Before any metalwork was riveted on A hole was cut out in the central portion of the shield boards - this was the position of the hand and knuckles of the user.
Next the rear face of the shield was covered by a layer of glued down linen, and the front face was covered in either linen or thin leather. This was also glued in place, wrapped over the edges and onto the back of the shield..

The hand grip was riveted into position through the planking & into holes on the shield boss rim.
The carrying strap was added.
Now the front boss was fully riveted in place - covering the hand hole.

Following this, the shield could be painted up with the design used by its owner.

Additional iron or wooden strips could be added for strengthening if needed.

Original shield boards are found to be in the ranges of 5mm to 13mm thick. (Comparable to heater shields.)

Varieties of early plywood using glued birchwood strips, or thin planking layered in alternating directions are known. As Roman, Frankish, Breton, Finnish and Irish data supports this; it is highly probable that the Welsh would have also known of these construction methods.

The central boss covering the hand was of iron sheet hammered to a dome shape, with a flat flange around the lower edge.

Bosses formed by "raising" over an iron stake, are stronger than types formed by "dishing", (hammering down onto a hollow wooden former, or bag of sand.)

## Basic shield constructions

## Circa 1265

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their Shields

Shields: For the majority of Cymric fighters, shields were round with a central iron boss, (rounded not pointed or spiked) & normally flat in construction; but convex ones must have also been in use -despite being vastly more awkward to manufacture, they balance well in the hand , give better coverage, and deflect missiles most effectively. - Characteristics the Welsh liked.
However, Cymric shields were not overtly large. Medium sized according to each man. They were not used in "shield wall" tactics very much – which for them was only as a last resort; they fought in a much more open order style which (in the period being discussed) allowed them initially to use their bows and to throw copious numbers of missiles – plus, they had to be able to run for miles with the things, up and down very steep Welsh hillsides! (When not engaged in warfare, they trained hard doing this.)
Being as much fighting was done from a point of view of an ambush; shield designs for "commoners" - where used, were in styles where the average man would not like to give the game away! Preferences shown on illustrations for clothing colours were for greens, muted yellows, oranges, rust colours, some reds and whites. In all probability common shield colours were likely to be similar – fairly muted. Pattern-wise the Welsh certainly used shield quartering and geometrical halves quite commonly. Images of animals and decorations seem to be simpler, not so over-complicated as in earlier "Dark-Age" periods.

Some Welsh did adopt the use of standard "heater" shaped shields. Indeed there are several illustrations, (one of them Welsh,) which back this up. Also the Henry III rolls, list the heraldry of numerous wealthy Welsh landowners. These heraldic arms of upper-class Welsh knights were in every way, as colourful as their English neighbours.

Weapons: Fighting on home ground, defensively, or from prepared positions it seems as if they used quite long spears to hold the enemy advance at bay and archery to harass them.
Fighting away from home – on the move; they preferred lighter spears, javelins, and throwing darts. In earlier times it had been noted a few of them had gained a liking for using light axes. Swords were of the general period types, but two-handed "great-swords" were extremely rarely used. They were deemed to be too cumbersome and slow to be any good. The Welsh preferred slightly lighter blades. Fighting mostly against rival Welsh bands they were not aiming to hack their way through heavy mail. Arrows were far better at piercing that.

The Welsh had numerous fighters who were excellent archers. Notably the men of Gwent. They used bows made from locally grown dwarf elm rather than imported yew wood. These were frequently left in the rough – I.E. they were not fully scraped and smoothly finished. Indeed, they often left knot-wood unshaven to preserve the natural strength of the stave. Leading to another mistaken belief, that the bows were crude and barbaric. Not all of them were full-sized longbows. However, it was noted that even those with only a short range had excellent penetrating power. Able to penetrate a palm thickness (three and a half inches) of oak door. When grouped together or shooting from behind cover these archers were very much a fearful prospect to encounter.

Alas, for various reasons, the Cymric foot-soldier was put at a grave disadvantage when he was cornered into a pitched-battle on open flat ground, unable to manoeuvre – as at Evesham.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their Equipment

The exception to the rule concerning lightly armoured Welsh fighting men, will of course always be the highest-ranking Princes and Welsh Lords themselves. If they were on horseback they would probably be as well-equipped as any English knight, & also have the best horses available.

However, we can be certain that most Welsh knights generally, *did* use lighter equipment. As, for decades, their Marcher opponents had also had a tendency to lighten their armour. In their attempts to be able to catch up with swift or fleeing raiders. In many respects, they copied the Welsh who they were up against – in some years, fighting on an almost daily basis.
Gerald of Wales noted this and made great distinction between the normal heavily armoured French and Norman knights, and the more lightly equipped retinues of the marcher lords. "Troops who have lived all their lives in the marches…. Have had long practice in waging war in local conditions… are bold, speedily deployed, and experienced in what they do. As military circumstances dictate, they ride well and advance quickly on foot." (Description of Wales. Book II, Ch, 8.)

Gloves: The Welsh fighting men of the period were not noted as wearing sophisticated hand protection. Be that as it may, leather gloves, mittens, - leather plated; horn plated - or mail, armoured gloves would still have been present in their 1260's, 13th century fighting equipment.

Regarding shoes: The Welsh had some odd fighting habits, according to some commentators – One was fighting barefoot, or wearing a shoe on one foot only. (Not recommended!) Shoes were used by them, and when used, were often of the type formerly termed as "bog-trotters". They were of fairly soft although hardwearing leather. A sort of cross between a Roman calliga sandal and moccasin. Compared to standard English period footwear they would have looked pretty crude as they were pulled into shape by the thongs that tied them up. They suited Welsh terrain & were quickly made.

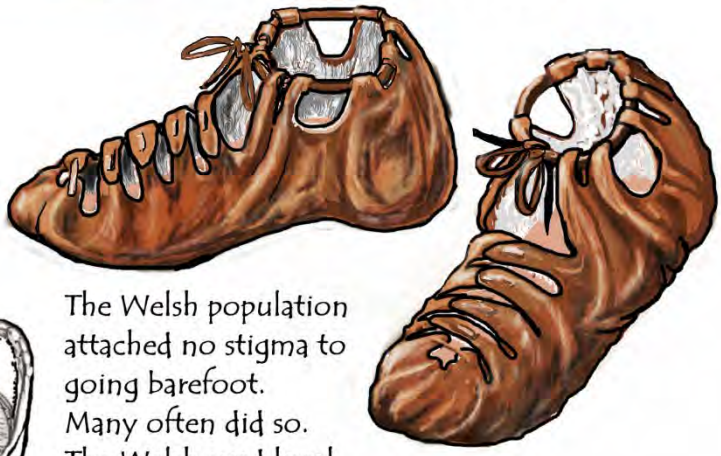
Boots: The Welsh reportedly, wore boots of soft leather that reached to just below the knee. They were a good fit and tied up so that they allowed hard running. Common fastening points were at the outer topmost edge and also around the ankle. Generally they were a matt finish such as sheepskin, but Black calfskin was also suitable. (The pictures of Peniarth 28 depict black boots.) Some would be oiled with a mixture of tallow and beeswax to make them more waterproof. Like most boots and shoes in Britain at this time, they had no "raised" heels, only virtually flat soles.

For those who were rich enough, shoes and boots could be imported from local makers over the March border. These were all the standard English varieties; ankle boots, toggle shoes and indoor shoes. However, for the average man even these fine leather boots were not brightly coloured with dyes, such items were exceedingly rare and emanated from the European continent and the trade was almost at a halt in the early 1260's.
Making shoes with a welt seam had still to be invented and the turn-shoe method was the usual type of construction for any professional shoemaker to use. High thigh boots such as 15th C versions were still totally unknown, despite the ready availability of leather in the Welsh economy.

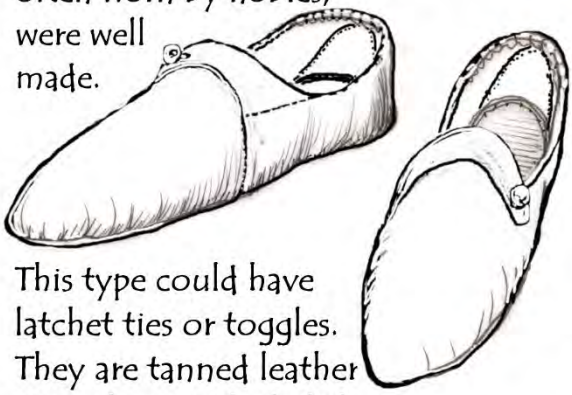
# Footwear of the 13th Century  Circa 1265

Home-made outdoor sandal-shoes.
A typical Welsh type.

These are shoes - sandals, possibly derived from the Roman style military calliga. Popular with the Welsh. They are cut and folded from sheepskin and pulled together with leather thonging and laced.



Shoes for indoor wear, often worn by nobles, were well made.



This type could have latchet ties or toggles. They are tanned leather turn-shoes with slightly pointed toes.

The Welsh population attached no stigma to going barefoot. Many often did so. The Welsh used local hides and sheepskins. The English wore footwear most of the time and thought it unusual to go unshod. Imported leathers from Spain became scarce from the late 1250's, until the end of the civil unrest in England around 1268.

Draw-string boots were fastened by pulling the lace tight and knotting or wrapping it under as shown. The end knot helps to stop the lace un-winding in theory. Although mostly found as remains in small sizes, these boots were worn by men, women & children.

The majority of lace positioning leathers are formed with simple two slit cuts (vertical), but the outer version (shown on the left) is a separate leather strip, passed downwards (from the inside) through eight horizontal cuts.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their background.

Historically there are very few totally accurate descriptions of the Welsh fighting man of the thirteenth century. Reports range from scurrilous comments and sayings - by people who were not Welsh; to glowing accounts of their bravery and mettlesome-ness. (By people who were Welsh, but did not live during the exact period in question.)

However, putting all such bias aside, it has to be true that Cymric warriors of all classes did succeed in holding onto most of their base territories for many years after the invasion of Britain by the Normans. Accepting this generalisation also means that they fought well in situations and countryside, which suited them; particularly their tactical way of defending themselves and waging war. For generations the Welsh conducted, and also repulsed, war-like incursions over the disputed borderland that lay in what were usually termed at the time as "the Marches". Historians have had an unfortunate tendency to berate the abilities of Cymric troops, but this is unjustified. They fought pitched battles within their own lands which they won handsomely.

The main reasons, so it would seem, why these fighting men were treated with distain in the past; stems from their apparent lack of glamour – indeed their very dearth of the standard norms in terms of military equipment -regarded as being necessary to wage war in an "accepted" manner. Looking at it from the other direction, it merely seems to be the remnants of a "sour-grapes" attitude. Few wealthy land-owning knights and barons wished to be reminded that they had been fought to a stalemate by a band of people who they regarded mostly as being peasants – and ungovernable peasants at that! The Welsh were exceptionally proud of their status as freemen.

They fought using the intimate knowledge of their local lands. They could "self-organise" themselves at very little notice, to form up into a coherent series of family or settlement based fighting units. They held a reputation of being "ever-ready" for war. They trained constantly. So-much-so, they were looked upon as being incapable of carrying on with suitable standards of commerce or agricultural work which were deemed vital for the basis of a so-called civilised society. In short, the Welsh were regarded as not being tamed like the majority of the English population. They were different. They held allegiance to families who had held sway in their localities for generations. Who you were, and who you were related to, bonded the fabric of each area together. Unfortunately, it is also true to say that things could be stirred up by petty squabbles and perceived injustices in a way which could then be remembered for generations. It was the machinations of various princes and local lords generally, which kept the numerous regions of Wales in turmoil. The concept of a unified Wales - as we now accept it, did not exist. During the 1260's Llewellyn the main Prince in the North was trying to achieve recognition as the feudal overlord of many areas which had never belonged to him. In 1265 he saw his chance to gain this recognition from King Henry III's brother-in-law, the Earl of Leicester, Simon de Montfort. Simon was nearing the pinnacle of his power, he held Henry in a state of limbo and looked as though he could take away his throne at any moment. To Llewellyn's way of thinking, signing a treaty and loaning Simon some 5000 troops to clear away the remains of Royalist opposition would smooth the path to being granted the title Prince of Wales – and to lasting independence. (The men "on loan" belonged to other subordinate lordlings. If they were to meet with disaster who is to know if Llewellyn really cared. It would strengthen his power at home.) Soon, troops such as these were marched away to meet their fate at the battle of Evesham.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their fighting style.

On the previous pages there are shown a selection of costumes and equipment readily available to the average Welsh soldier. Unlike their European, French or Southern English counterparts, we can gather from repeated descriptions of them, they actually preferred to be lightly armoured. Unless defending the access points to a settlement or fortified position, they did not have a habit of forming into close-up formations. They actively disliked fighting in a restrictive shield-wall for example. This was a fighting style that they had come up against on numerous occasions in the past; used over the centuries by rival Saxons, Vikings, Anglo-Danish and Normans. It wasn't a system that worked well on the uneven, broken ground of rocky gullies, marshy ravines and steep hillsides of their homelands. (They had a habit of rushing forwards, attacking, then retreating.)

To quote Geraldus Cambrensis, "They do not shine… in fixed formations."

Most areas where they gathered to fight were densely wooded with a fair amount of low bushes and undergrowth. Also there were the numerous valleys with rivers to contend with. In addition to these, there were many local streams with copious amounts of boggy, marshy ground strewn round-about. They used all of these to great advantage in order to halt invaders in their districts.

The Welsh were particular *not to clear undergrowth and not to fell timber* close to their chosen trackways. A vast area of legal contention reared its head whenever English lords cleared forests away from the sides of roads and paths. The English needed them cleared, the Welsh wanted them obscured. Both sides literally came to exchanging blows and fighting over this specific issue.

Unwelcome visitors to their districts had to struggle their way through such territory. Whereas, the local fighters knew every shortcut and parcel of covering ground to hide their progress. Being encumbered by "fancy equipment", as they called it, was not conducive to how they fought.

More translations taken from the writings of Gerald of Wales yield these useful commentaries:-
"The Welsh people are light and agile. Fierce rather than strong and totally dedicated to the practice of arms.
On many occasions they have not hesitated to fight without any protection at all – against men clad in iron." (I.e. Mail.)
"They do not shine in open combat and in fixed formations, but harass their enemy using ambushes and night attacks."
"They rush forward rapidly attacking very fiercely, but they are as quick to retire. If pursued they will turn about suddenly to send forth a hail of arrows and javelins upon the foe."
"They use light weapons which do not impede their quick movements. Small leather corselets, handfuls of throwing darts, javelins, round shields, and also long spears."
"They wear helmets and some have iron greaves."
"Most of the common folk prefer to fight on foot, going either barefooted or else wearing boots made from untanned…" (Soft?) "…leather. These are only roughly sown together."

The Welsh it seems (luckily for my researches so far) seemed to have been remarkably consistent in regards to their fighting preferences. One could say that they were very, *very* traditional.

# Cymric Troops – Allies & Foes - Their Influence.

Knowing these facts, it comes as no surprise that the fighting men of the Marches also had a tendency to use lighter fighting equipment as well. As a direct example of this, the FitzAlan family, (of Oswestry, Clun and many other holdings,) had an officially recognised version of lightly equipped knight. Who were termed as "Muntatores" or muntators. Indeed, it seems as though many of these men did their service to FilsAlan in accordance with *Welsh law* taking precedence over what would normally be expected in an assumed "English" feudal system.

Why did the system work? Simple; muntatores cost half as much to equip and so he doubled up on the number of such troops. They were soundly trained, most of them rode well, and they could move speedily both on foot or on horseback.
FitzAlan rather surprisingly, also kept a goodly supply of spare horses at most of his larger landholdings, (both in England and in the marches,) and he passed these mounts out for use by his men when they were needed. This in itself, was *very* unusual. (Marcher areas owned by other English lords would have expected both the horses and equipment to be provided by the man called upon to do his service.) There was a large horse stud farm in the (iron-age) hillfort north of Clun, another in the region of Oswestry, and others at Wroxeter and Arundel in England.

It is also recorded that locals from both sides of what we would now consider to be the Welsh-English border *frequently* came to assist lord FilsAlan's men in times of duress or open war. They fought with equal ferocity against rival English warbands, or their Welsh neighbours attacking from outside of their area. They did so because they perceived the FilsAlan family line to be a continuation of the original landowners who maintained a continuity of Welsh laws and customs alongside those pertaining to England proper. According to local period surveys, censuses and other legal documents, up to 73% of the fighting men who fought for FilsAlan's retinue were Welsh, using Welsh custom. Hence my inclusion of this information in this Welsh supplement.

During the early stages of the battle of Lewes in 1264, lord FitzAlan, (who was fully armoured at the time,) was toppled from his mount by a 2lb stone hurled from a staff-sling. Disabled by the blow and following his capture, he and his men who survived the engagement were beaten, harassed and taunted by men of a retinue from London.
They were slandered and enraged by comments about their appearance. It was recorded that John FitzAlan himself and his retinue were even called "Welsh". Following this their horses and best fighting equipment were taken as spoils. As there was no food left in Lewes and Simon de Montfort needed FitzAlan to go back and hold the borderlands of the Marches, they were released. The Londoners thought that was the end of the matter… but, they were to meet again.
… Because of his method of supply and his ability to reequip his own men, the FitzAlan contingent merely moved to Arundel castle, got new mounts and weapons and then promptly decided to be avenged on these former opponents. During a brief and unexpected attack which took place near to St Albans, it was rumoured that up to 650 men of the erstwhile London unit perished. They could not contend with the speed and ferocity of these mounted, lightly armed, Marcher troops. They were fighting in the Welsh / Marcher manner and in all likelihood, they ambushed the London unit on the route home. This action was not about politics, but entirely because they felt they had been dishonoured. -This is merely one instance of Welsh influence.

**Comment from the Author, "The 13th Century Welsh peoples, being strongly motivated by traditions which were not in tune with countries influenced to a greater extent by French culture, were viewed at the time, as being uncivilized. In truth, the full social changes of Norman feudalism had not yet saturated Welsh speaking areas. This in itself produced a marked difference in the attitudes which permeated their local society structures and legal systems. They did things their way… this was sometimes copied by Marcher lords who also used it to great advantage."**

# NEWES OF Þe (knowne) WORLDE

**Issue Number XIII.B revised  For Circa 1265  Dateline August the 4th 1265.**

## Troops of Cymru. Allies & Foes. General comments.

One moot topic was the iron supply – which was frequently brought over the borders from areas of the English march. It was commonly interrupted in times of border unrest. Sometimes this was due to complaints, made by various Marcher lord's against local rivals who supplied their Welsh enemies. More often it was due to the destruction of towns and villages where iron production, iron working and border trading was carried out. Thus short-lived gains of raiding, had a natural tendency to bring about a long-term scarcity. Possibly, this may be yet another reason for the Welsh propensity to use old styles of equipment & less mail armour; quite apart from its weight.

Cymry (Welsh) were often accused of being barbaric in fighting habits as well as in appearance. They certainly did shout out a wild tumultuous war-cry when they sprang into the attack, and as far as the fighting goes, warriors of noble birth, sometimes still had the annoying tradition of dispatching noble rivals and relieving them of their heads. This was done in accordance with very strict custom and the perpetrators seemed to have the idea that "outsiders" should not participate in the practice. In fact, mass uprisings habitually occurred if English lords took it upon themselves to do exactly the same thing to a Welsh rival. Ultimately, it also makes me ask if Simon de Montfort's body was decapitated by Roger de Mortimer's friend – due to a hidden local custom?

Next, in general warfare, you were extremely lucky if you were not killed at a Welsh battlefield site. The majority of survivors from battles deep inside Welsh territory were the ones who had fought their way back onto home ground. Cymric fighters rarely took prisoners – even other Welshmen. This was the cause of a stupendous number of internecine blood feuds between differing Welsh districts. Hence the wide practice of fierce sudden attack and quick retreats, with very little stigma or blame attached to losing any engagement. It was not shameful to retreat. Beaten on one day, they would turn up again the very next day… and quite likely do a repeat performance. Welsh troops had a strange dogged determination. It was a different "mind-set". The English were constantly infuriated by this!

Is this another underlying reason for the butchery which took place at the battle of Evesham?

Indeed, being honest, a known English lord had a much better chance of being ransomed back to his family, than any rival Welsh lord with lands which were technically in "Wallia pura" – the areas of Wales, completely outside of English jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, I have not come across anything definite regarding "wildness" of appearance. No-one writing ever took the trouble to be specific about what it was, that created this impression. I have not found a single period reference to long-haired, woad-covered, blue-faced warriors. If that's your idea of a Welsh "barbarian" – then it is severely out of kilter with real 1260's history.

**Comments from the Author, "My intention is to inform the general reader, who may be unfamiliar with the complexities of 13th C history. It is not to justify, berate, glorify or defame the actions of any of our ancestors. (Noble or otherwise.) In such a spirit, no offence is intended in any wise, to people, places, faiths or Countries. Period comments are translations from those perceived to have been uttered, voiced or written at the time.**


# NEWES OF þe (knowne) WORLDE

**Issue Number XIII. B Addendum  For Circa 1265  Dateline September 22nd 2025.**


## Troops of Cymru. Allies & Foes. General comments.

On the contrary, I come across reports of how well they clean and shine their teeth. How they are careful about their hair – and how some men kept it short and well cut, supposedly, to avoid entanglement in low bushes. Also, it was not the norm for Welshmen to have unkept beards. Most were careful to shave and this is clearly the case in illustrations contained in "Peniarth 28". Furthermore, general facial cleanliness must have been high. They washed face, hands and feet when visiting others before entering a house, if they intended to stay – no matter how lowly the place was. That was all part of the hospitality rules of Cymru. Most Welshmen knew how to swim.

We therefore have to take stock of other social faux-pas' that created comments and caused outrage in the 13th century and in the 1260's, these are details we can get from other sources.

One of the commonest things shunned as being *unacceptable* by those terming themselves as "civilized" throughout the whole of Europe and England was the base usage of skins and furs, without them having been properly tailored for use as inner-linings to cloaks, or garments where it was normally invisible in use. (Ermine robes, etc, where the fur's *rarity* was openly on display, being exceptions.)
Using sheepskins as they were, and not turning them into woollen cloth and parchments was considered unthinkable!

However, sheepskins, tanned or otherwise, were widely available to all classes of Cymric society in a way that was impossible for the average Englishman. Welsh families ate mutton or lamb meat regularly; the English lower classes did not.
My conclusion from this being, that such a ready source material for *outer* garments would have been in general and constant usage by the poorer members of the Welsh population.
For on many occasions (as with the supply of iron items,) the importation of finished bolts of cloth – both woollen and linen, into Welsh areas from England was banned. Of necessity, the peoples of North Wales and West Wales in particular, had to make do with what they had.

The much-prized broadloom cloth from England was of a supreme quality that was difficult to match and various Welsh areas happily traded livestock cattle, sheep, leather and raw bales of wool for it. Their cloth makers stayed extremely localised. "Home" output would have been set up to produce traditional items and was readily used-up, producing specifics such as distinctive cloaks with *regional* colours and patterns.

Home linens were somewhat different. They were excellent quality, always readily available and were turned into countless items. Such as local products like the stiff bed sheeting, called brychan.

**Comments from the Author, "For the general reader, unfamiliar with the 13th Century, history is full of surprises."**

# NEWES OF ye (knowne) WORLDE

**Issue Number XIII.B Addendum For Circa 1265 Dateline September 22nd 2025.**

## Troops of Cymru. Allies & Foes. General comments.

There are small margin drawings of Cymric fighting men and archers, (literally scattered through the footnotes of history) to be found in parchments from the 1240's to the 1300's. These merely confirm the general descriptions already given by Gerald of Wales. They do however show that the hairstyles had changed slightly. So Cymric hairstyles can be anything from shaven, or very short – almost cropped and showing the ears, to medium long and even swept-back. Very modern looking in fact. I have tried to replicate these hairstyles in my own drawings as they are different to the English norms. (Which mostly show the coiffured styles of the upper classes.)

### What Welsh Leather Armour – was not…..

N.B. References to hardened – shiny, wax boiled "entire" leather armours of any kind have not been found in Welsh commentaries. As wax boiling *appreciably* increases the weight of leather – to being the equal of iron, it seems sane for us to assume that it was unsuited to their fighting style and simply was not used, other than as a few reinforcement plates. I cannot find a surfeit of wax in the Welsh economy listed in the period under scrutiny. In all practicality, pseudo "Roman or Greek- style" corselet armours, leg greaves or arm bracers would have been totally unknown.

It can be something of a shock to modern people, when they realise that strong local identities existed in the 1260's. Put simply, Wales was not a fully unified national entity as it is now. Indeed, to assemble influence and power, was the constant intention of prince Llywelyn ap Gruffudd of Gwynedd, as he struggled to gain supremacy over all the other areas of Wales and be recognised as Prince of Wales by his English neighbours.

To confuse the issue further, noble families on either side of the border had frequently inter-married with Welsh and English partners. Thus disagreements from the past were at best, either thankfully forgotten, or at worse - enhanced. Prince Llywelyn and Roger de Mortimer, major characters involved in the clashes of the time, were in fact cousins.
Important fights over land holdings were not simple disputes centred upon some pre-supposed national identity. It was far more often the case, that they came to the fore over perceived injustices to do with legal rights, inter-family tensions and insults. There were certainly numerous instances where advantage could be gained by using a specific legal code… be it Welsh or English. Such ploys had built-in differences which constantly and deliberately caused contentions. All sides were opportunistic and took to fighting if they thought it was to their own advantage.

Exactly the same type of situations occurred in England, and King Henry III had family problems which were the bane of his entire reign. His argument with Simon de Montfort, his own brother in law, culminated most notably, and lamentably, with the battle of Evesham in 1265.

**Comments from the Author, "My intention is to inform the general reader, and make known data which is often very difficult to find, as many books are not written in timeline order. I hope this "potted history" is of use."**

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Bibliography: General data from items listed below.

Giraldus Cambrensis 1145/46 – 1223 is the author most trusted for delivering us pretty typical descriptions of Welsh warriors and their fighting style. In his works The Description of Wales, book I chapter 8 and book II chapters 2, 3, 8 and 10 he makes numerous statements and assumptions which seem to tally well with historical reality, still true in the 1260's.

For illustrations of Welsh tunics and day-clothes, there is Darluniau o lyfr cyfraith Hywel Dda. By Daniel Huws.
The original manuscript is Peniarth 28, known mainly as a version of the Law book of Hywel the good. This particular version is dated variously by historians on the grounds of script and grammar, to be from the 1250's to the 1280's. The manuscript itself was drawn and written by a Welshman. Giving us a rare version of illustrations done by a native of the country.
ISBN 0-907158-28-5 (Published 1988) Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru.

For background history to the Welsh kingdoms and Principalities which covers from about c.410 – c.1415, which is both extensive and general you may try:
The Welsh Wars of Independence. By David Moore.
ISBN 0-7524-3321-0 (Published 2005) Tempus Publishing Ltd.

For background history of Welsh, Marcher relationships both extensive and general you may try:
The Welsh Marcher Lordships. #1: Central & North. By Philip Hume.
ISBN 978-1-910839-45-4 (Published 2021 & 2023) Logaston Press.

For background history leading up to the Battle of Evesham with copious footnotes etc, try:
The Baron's War (including the battles of Lewes and Evesham)
By William Henry Blaauw, esq, M.A. This work undertaken and written before 1844.
2nd edition. Published 1871 by Bell & Daldy, York St. Covent Garden. London.

For modern reading and some general information that gives an excellent overall view of the historical setting / campaign leading up to the battle of Evesham, try:-
Lewis and Evesham 1264-1265 (Simon de Montfort and the Baron's War.)
By Richard Brooks. ISBN 978 1 4728 1150 9 Osprey Publishing ltd. Published 2015.

My grateful thanks goes to all those members of Circa 1265 and all the members of the many other living-history groups who have successfully helped to bring this period "back to life". Likewise, to the countless unsung historians, archaeologists & curators who have compiled copious information, drawings and collections of artifacts in the past. Without them "history" would not exist and we would not have the inspiration to keep on researching. (A.W.)
If I have missed anyone in terms of acknowledgements on sources, please accept my apologies.

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Written & illustrated by A.Westmancoat. Member of Circa 1265. 22/9/2025.