

Pentre Gwyddel Interlude – a brief context for the following three writings...

I like islands. I like the concept that there are finite edges to them; that they are self-contained with their own life and character; that you can walk or cycle to their edges, and then maybe walk round them looking beyond to the horizon from starting point back to starting point; that they can be hard to get to, involving a plan and often some effort. Those that I have come to know well include Alderney, arriving by boat just ahead of a storm in my late teenage years; the Isle of Man from my childhood with my grandparents; a re-acquaintance with Anglesey from the same time, then with my parents, later with work, and now as a place in which to immerse oneself; another is an unnamed scrap of rock and trees with a cabin and sauna in the Gulf of Bothnia off Finland's coast, approachable only by rowing boat after a walk through the forest; and most recently, a re-acquaintance with the islands off the coast of Gothenburg with my wife. All are places where, when I had first arrived, I strangely '*felt at home*', like putting on an old overcoat for the first time and finding it's a perfect fit; comfortable; that I have somehow worn it, or '*been here before*'. And now there's this one, *Ynys Gybi*, an island off an island off an island off a continent's far, far west; an island so full of history and the visible remains of that history, it is redolent with it; an island where the old place names describe what you once might have found there had you ever ventured this far in those days before easy 'tourism' took us over; places which are described in a language so old that it predates - by a marching Roman country mile - those very Romans who once invaded and then lived here for a short while, nearly two thousand years ago...

On the most southern edge of *Ynys Gybi* is the settlement of *Pentre Gwyddel* which means '*Irish Village*' in the language of this land. It nestles above the sea amongst rocky hilly outcrops in what was – unknowable to them – going to become the end of the known *Celtic* world in Britain, sheltered as it is from the prevailing winds by ancient boggy greenwood groves and thickets of alder and willow. The hedges are high and old, and there is also a small pine wood. As a settlement, *Pentre Gwyddel* partly shares a name with nearby *Cytiau'r Gwyddelod* on the lower flanks of *Mynydd Tŵr*, or *Tower (Holyhead) Mountain*. *Gwyddelod* is another '*Irish Village*', but substantial and with many remnants

of hut circles whose visible stone foundations date back 2000 years and which themselves occupied a previous settlement going back 3000 years even before that. And all this history – and much more – grips onto and into the bedrock of *Ynys Gybi* - or *Holy Island* - so-called because of the plethora of standing stones, burial cairns and other religious sites which are to be found all over its land surface. And, separated by a narrow strait now called ‘the inland sea’ caused by two causeways funnelling the tides in and out at each end, Ynys Gybi stands just off its mother island of *Ynys Môn* or, to give it perhaps its more familiar Old Norse name, *Anglesey*.

It was to here that the invading Roman armies finally drove the residue of the doomed Celtic Priests who had made one last futile stand after fighting a running rear-guard defensive action at their backs for years, and who were all mercilessly slaughtered here at sword and spear point - if they were lucky enough to have had a quick death - amongst these very places. To be certain that the genocide would be complete and all resistance exterminated, the Romans then consigned the Celt’s places of worship to oblivion by systematically cutting down all the dappled groves of oak trees where they had, for countless generations, communed with their gods and spirits. Thus secure in their military success, the Romans set up their *own* settlements here, joining them together by roads linking together their strings of forts and outposts, and sometimes incorporating the original trails which had long predated them. One of the most splendid examples of a Roman fort locally to Pentre Gwyddel is almost hidden by the modern harbour complex in Holyhead town itself, (a place which might be more correctly pronounced as *Holy-Head*, rather than *Holly-Head*). The fort is still, two thousand years later, well-preserved from when it served as a substantial sheltered port-fortification for expanding Roman coastal communications and trade, for the import of Irish gold, and for the copper being mined from nearby *Parys* just inland from *Amlwch* on the north coast, to then be exported all over their vast empire.

They also built a watchtower up at *Caer y Tŵr* on *Mynydd Tŵr* – *Holyhead Mountain* – itself standing inside the more ancient defensive stone walls of the earlier settlements up there, and from where, on a rare clear day, you can share with them what they must also have seen; the views across to distant *Éire* – *Ireland*, or *Hibernia* as they and the Greeks knew it; north to *Ellan Vannin*

- *The Isle of Man*; and even further north to *Maol nan Gall* in its native *Gaelic* – also known to us as The Mull of Galloway.

So complete was their occupation, that Roman Latin was pragmatically incorporated into the language of those who chose to live along-side them rather than try to fight them, and so ubiquitous was their presence that any Welsh place-name now with the prefix *Caer* denotes the site of a Roman Fort or camp of any size and usage - *Cae* itself being the indigenous Welsh for *a field*. The Welsh name for *Chester* – the common suffix for such places in what was much later to become the concept of ‘*England*’, and to be found in such names as near-by *Manchester* (*Manceinion* in Welsh) and far-off *Winchester*, was where there was to be found a Roman fort of any size - is merely *Caer*, clearly being to the native Welsh, the epitome of, and base-camp for, all Roman domination, benign or otherwise. And far down in Galicia in North West Spain, there also appear several *castres* on maps and on corresponding hillsides if you care to search for them, the root of the name being thus obvious, as might also be the case for our word *castle*.

The Celts - *Y Celtaid* - who brought to these islands that they now call *Ynysydd Prydain* (and known as *Britannia* to the Romans) so much language and culture from their origins in central Europe, were not however confined just to *Cymru-Wales* (where the name ‘*Wales*’ is derived from the *Anglo-Saxon* term given to ‘*foreigners*’, or ‘*outsiders*’, and generically covered *all foreigners* who were under the influence of the-then Roman Empire), and are to be found along the fringes of The Atlantic Ocean. To each other, the *Welsh* call their country *Cymru*, coming from the plural *Cymro*, itself thought to derive from an earlier *Brittonic-Brythonic language* word, ‘*combrog*’ or ‘*combrogos*’ – ‘*a compatriot*’ or ‘*a fellow-countryman*’ although, as in many languages, the *exact* sense of the meaning of a word does not translate *exactly* from one into the other. Their ancient language is *Cymraeg*. So, in identifying oneself by ‘*I am Welsh*’ in *Cymraeg*, it is ‘*Cymro ydw i...*’ *I am a fellow-countryman (of yours)*... and often followed by a friendly ‘*Croeso*’ – ‘*Welcome*’. Some ‘*English*’ people of my acquaintance would dispute this ‘*friendliness*’ but in my experience it’s *how* you approach another person that determines *how* they will respond *back* to you. I have yet to encounter a *rude* French waiter for example, but perhaps *that* fault is entirely mine...

The edges of Europe to which the Celtic tribes were driven - the so-called 'Celtic Fringes' - includes *Galicia* in the far North-West of Spain-Iberia, where they speak *Gallego*, play bag-pipes, dance reels, and make the best white wine you will ever drink from Albariño grapes grown in the *Rías Baixas* region of that 'country'. This fringe is a kind of loosely united *cultural club*, which includes *Bretagne-Bertaèyn* that we know as Brittany; *Kernow* or *Kernou* that we know as Cornwall; *Éire* which is more generally known to outsiders as Ireland; *Ellen Vannin* is The Isle of Man as previously mentioned; and the variously known *Caledonia-Alba-Scoti*, to the rest of the world is known as Scotland.

And somewhere in the mix of all this is *Pentre Gwyddel*.

The lane - or *lôn* – to it is a narrow one, coming off the old stage-coach and former turnpike road built by Thomas Telford in 1815 to connect London with Holyhead, an arduous and perilous journey in itself even *before* travellers had boarded the boat to Ireland. Unprepossessingly, this lane leaves the village of *Pont-rhydbont* by a bus stop, and *Pont-rhydbont* is an interesting name in itself - with '*pont-bont*' originally coming from the Latin meaning '*bridge*', and '*rhyd*' meaning a '*ford*' - so, literally meaning '*bridge-ford bridge*' or possibly even '*the bridge-at-a-ford-bridge*'. It is more well-known to tourists making for Trearddur as '*Four Mile Bridge*', being the place where the original four-mile marker stone once stood about four miles along the old road to and from Holyhead – or *Caer Gybi*. The village's original low white cottages still stand guard at what once was the only fordable crossing point here between the islands of *Môn* and *Gybi* across the narrow *Cymyran Strait*, this before a stone causeway was built linking the two and under the bridge arch of which the tide fiercely boils in both directions, in and out, twice-daily as the water levels equalise. Thomas Telford later built the more direct *Stanley Embankment* for his new and innovative road, so named after the progressive Stanley Family of *Eagle-and-Child*, *Alderley Edge* and *Stanley Arms* pub fame, linking large tracts of land and wealth in Cheshire and Lancashire to this area through marriage. *Everything is woven together...*

Telford also built the Menai Suspension Bridge in 1826 – itself an astonishing piece of technology in its day - to get his road across from the mainland to

Anglesey. This had previously been a dangerous crossing undertaken by ferry boat and made more perilous if, according to local history, you couldn't find a *sober* boatman in the pubs of *Caernarfon* to take you across. Telford would himself have been later astonished at Robert Stephenson's 1850 tubular bridge, built to carry his new railway between London and Holyhead, a journey made today by direct train in about three and a half hours which would in turn have astonished Stephenson, and *certainly* astonished the Roman Legions who had had to walk here from there. Before the railway, drovers had made the journey to the Midlands and London markets with their cattle, sheep and geese in about four weeks, and then had sent their dogs back to find their own way home when all transactions had been completed, thus informing their families when the dogs arrived barking at their cottage doors, that they were themselves on their way home with next year's income...

This is history and culture which we all by-pass, unnoticed, in a matter of *seconds* in our cars, and even complain about the *50mph* speed limit slowing us down on the even later 1980s road bridge, since built – again would-be *astonishingly* to him – on concrete decking *above* Stephenson's original railway.

Telford's Road was to be designated as the the A5 in 1923, and has since been superseded in importance, across Anglesey at least, by the visionary A55 which was also known as the *Trans-Europe E22 Highway* (pre- that 2016 act of *national* self-harm, that is) linking Dublin to Riga, and then even beyond to Moscow. The local Romans would indeed have been both amazed and proud to see this feat of modern engineering, communication and trade which is echoing their own tramping 2000-year-old footsteps, sentiments and aspirations – and those of the Celts, even before them...

And thus, into more a peaceful environment than this modern race-track of a dual carriageway, and after winding through *Y Fali* via the A5 and then by the old turnpike to *Bae Trearddur Bay*, the lane to *Pentre Gwyddel* leads inauspiciously off between dense hedges and soggy fields towards the sea and village of *Rhoscolyn*, where it turns off at *Pentre Iago* to further single-lane narrow as it zigzags between high sheltering embankments rich in summer flowers humming with insects, and then is heavy with the autumn blackberries, damsons and sloes. The exposed stunted trees give a flavour of the weather

inevitably to come, as they bend ever-further over and away from the almost constant prevailing wind which makes landfall after blowing in from The Celtic Sea. The lôn then narrows even further, passing the occasional remote house, or *tŷ*, and continues on down, eventually to Pentre Gwyddel itself where its final act ends in a private development on the Bodior Estate, passes the former old farmhouse, and ends as a track down to the wide expanse of dune-backed and pine-tree woodlands of the sand of *Traeth Llydan*.

And it is from here that I offer these three following '*writings*' in order to give you a mere *taste* of a place which is so steeped in history that, by merely digging a trench or a hole for a new hedge or bush in the garden, a gushing fountain of it seems to set itself free from the bedrock itself; a history both as layered and as convoluted as the exposed rocks on which the *pentre* stands, with its distant views across to *Yr Wyddfa-Snowdon* and the majestic *Carneddau*; to the far-off empty *Rhinogs Fach* and *Fawr*, and to the disappearing-into-the-haze line of *Yr Eifl – The Rivals* – on the *Lleyn*, leading right down to the speck of the '*Island of Twenty Thousand Saints*' of *Ynys Enlli* - or *Bardsey* in the Norse - sitting just above the horizon, and beyond which lies the *Irish Sea* , and then distant Celtic Galicia far beyond that.

In my garden, perched on a huge once-beached sea-logged tree stump, I have a fishing float from Galicia, washed up to my feet, green and sea-weedy, after its long and drifting journey. Like a message in a bottle it had floated here across the Bay of Biscay, a journey long ago undertaken by countless people just like *us*, to places just like *this*. And so, this is a *place*, a *lle*, which sustains imagination, speculation, memory, ideas, thinking, and creative activity; or simply induces nothing more in one than just *looking* and *absorbing*.

And if you *do* ever travel the rich and winding road to Rhoscolyn, you will *always* find a warm welcome, a '*croeso cynnes*', with good food and good ale, in the village's splendid pub, *The White Eagle*.

For further reading about the history of these islands, written from a different perspective to those usually offered, I can recommend several books, including 'The Story of Wales' and 'The Turning Tide: A Biography of The Irish Sea', both by Jon Gower; 'Wales Before 1066' by Donald Gregory; and as an insight into what has happened to these, our islands, since 1066, 'The Book of Trespass' by Nick Hayes.



Rock strata of Traeth Llydan. History similarly rarely exists in straight lines



The lane leading to 'Birds in a Pentre Gwyddel Garden'



The beach: 'Irish Ellen and the Green Stone'



Rhoscolyn and the old lifeboat station: backdrop to 'Morlo y Ddu'



Ffynnon Santes Gwenfaen : Saint Gwenfaen's Well

Amongst the many religious and spiritual relics on Ynys Gybi, this ancient two-chambered well on the cliff-top route from Rhoscolyn Headland (seen in the background and home to the rare chough) to Bae Trearddur is perhaps one of the most thought-provoking because of its associated legends and dramatic location... and arguably one of the most scenic and working-up-a-thirst-walks to a pub there is...



Footprints towards a drawing, and back... Another kind of 'estela'...

Birds in a Pentre Gwyddel Garden.....*Adar mewn Gardd Pentre Gwyddel*

My golden pheasant – *ffesant* in his native Welsh -
Is a walking trysor-Cymraeg-treasure.
Grown fat this year on scraps, he stalks his fence,
From where in Spring, a mere grey chick, he stabbed the peanuts from my hand.
Painful; but he was wary of my leather glove,
And now, me wearing it, he is suspicious still, and won't yet come near,
Despite my soft *Croeso*.
So I took it off, and with lancing beak from him and wince from me,
We shared those moments all the summer, as both together do we now.

This autumn, a now-majestic golden Prince, he struts his whole domain,
While I, the visiting and humble servant, offer these tithes and bribes
As he comes to collect his royal tax, beady-eyed, and slowly;
Temptation, greed, and his empty crop are fighting caution.
And so now here he is,
His memory and the hunger winning the fight,
And the peanuts go,
Like rattling bullets fed into a Gatling gun.

Beware those guns my fabulous friend,
For it is near the time
When other men than me, will soon be out to shoot you down.....

I hang the cage, a wire column filled with nuts,
In sight of the pines beyond the field
From where I know I am being watched.
And so I sit and wait.
And, sure enough, the scrap of grey
Grows bigger in a loping noisy chatter-flight
To swoop and grab and swing the playground game.
As, cackling like a crazéd crone,
She attacks with wild and frantic sword-like thrusts,
While she sprays her white shit everywhere;
This, I like to think,
Is a kind of gratitude or greeting; or maybe not.
It's just a thought, to make the window-mess seem more worthwhile.
And so my speckled woodpecker,
Known to her brood as *Cnocell y Brycheuyn*,
Is raucous off, back to her hole-drilled tree,
To feed her always-hungry family
Who may also later learn to come here, unmolested.

And there are many others.
The small black seeds draw families of finches gold,
And bolder by the day, appreciative,

For they always acrobatic dive
From bush to seeds and back again
Without trapeze, and sing for their audience,
Unlike in any circus of high-wire flying acrobats.
Llinos aur they call; we are here. Are you watching?

The several *titw glas* and *titw glo*,
Blue or black-capped,
Risk a rare exposure by the leaning fence.
Then, with startling black, white and military azure,
The hopping skipping robbing *piod* come,
While circling skywards *bwncath*,
Buzzard-brown, is mewing overhead,
They are wary-warned off, and hide, small, in the denseness of the thicket.

They much prefer the old hedge-highway anyway;
An ancient storm-bent wooded angled-mangled-tangle,
Along which they flutter to the feeder,
Thus affording a secure and spiky tunnel
To and fro from field-end of yellow gorse and bramble,
Dense with scents and nests and shelter,
And safe from *hebog's* aerial silent hawk-attack.
And so *glo* and *glas*, with squabbling sparrows – *adar y to* –
Gorge the seeds; noisy, they throw unwanted chaff to ground.
Where shy dunnocks - *llwyd y gwrych* –
Wait patient amongst the bottom twigs and leaves,
And rustle quietly for their share.

This new commotion then reminds my dazzling Prince
Of his other business here,
And he makes a noisy exit from my wounded hand,
Crowing for those fallen scraps as well.
And so *nothing* is wasted,
And might just see them through
The Wild Welsh Atlantic storms of winter
Which lie in wait, idling there, in their swirls across the open sea.
For soon those unwinding winds will come,
Ferocious howling, out and down
Between the granite cliffs of our close-by giants,
The brooding twins of Rhinogs Fach and Fawr,
Searching, scouring, and savage merciless.

And so my little ones find the shelter and now eat well.....
Tra y gallwch....
.....while you can.

Storm Irish Ellen and the Green Stone

Irish Ellen,

So clearly named after the fair and freckled red-head I had met in Galway,
has now been roaring round my house all night,
as her namesake once had fiery-stormed around her own, all of that day, back then.
And now she is spinning off up north
to the Norwegian Sea and Scandinavia,
as this other Celtic Ellen may well sometime herself have done,
perhaps aboard some passing fishing boat, or with a travelling circus,
as, like this storm, she would never in her life, be still.
But this was all of sweet three score years ago,
when *...she was feisty seventeen...*
Well you know just I what I mean...
Ah, those words and songs of our frantic adolescence...
... and how could I dance with another
when I saw her standing there...

... 'Boys, will yer tek this feckin' girl on yer bikes back ter Manchester wid yer.
Cos I can't do nottin' wid her' ... Bridie, our lovely landlady, had laughed,
as *'this feckin girl'* glowered back at her buxom mother,
but had sideways winked and grinned with me
across the morning toast, and jam, and tea.
She had soft moist lips I remember –
the first girl's lips I had *ever* trembling and gently touched -
and green eyes, also the first from which I had deeply drunk and therein swam;
rich textured, shining cool and speckled; an aggregate of mingled flecks,
just like this stone this other stormy Ellen
has now delivered up to me, to my shingled feet,
and thus has set my memory, youthful, seventeen, running,
and wild again, all a-tingle.

My stone now rests firmly in my arm,
round and weighted. And strangely warm,
considering it was born in Her Dark and Celtic Sea,
and where for aeons, has waited for this moment.
Then, up into the light, and now into the foam, now on sand, and now with me,
just as *she* had also once so cradled well, within my hands,
breasts and buttocks both,
in the late moonshine of that dewy Gaelic night,
as, waylaid was I, of all those places possible,
outside the garden privy, when
I was kidnapped in the silky Irish dark.
Me, still half asleep despite my grass-wet feet,
and after the long emptying thunder of a teenage beer-full bladder,
I had silently creaked closed the wooden door
only to be taken, drowsy, quite by surprise, and from behind

with a gentle giggle, and a quiet... *Sshhh....*
And then a softly whispered...
'I thought you'd never come'....

And, both expected and unexpected,
so to be sure...

...I did.

Jeff Teasdale, August 21st 2020, Traeth Llydan, and August 21st 1964, Galway

Morlo Y Ddu

Y traeth

Always an anxious moment this, carrying the kayaks down to the beach.....

The tide is up and concentrates the sunbathers,
Squashed into a narrow strip between themselves, wave-edge and dunes,
All watching with an idle interest
As clearly, not being as young as I think I am,
And launching and jumping in not being quite the graceful movement I would like,
They are waiting for a mishap.
Andy, half my years and thus more agile,
Is already off and paddling close to rocks on the south edge of the bay
Where I catch him by the old lifeboat station,
This, now a millionaire's keepsake museum, I am told,
With an original rowing lifeboat like the one that once was here.
It is now unseen and its keel will never feel the sea again.

There were eight men, all good friends and neighbours;
One in the prow with an oil lamp;
Six rowing;
Coxswain in the stern, steering,
Perished all, under one great wave, thus erasing this tiny village of its men,
And, but for its casual white-washed sunshine holiday-homers,
Is now again left often empty, dead and still.
There is nobody here in February, when I love it best.
But that is in the season of the howling Rhinog storms,
When Ynys Defaid and Ynys Traus are gone; swamped by a grey spray.
And lost to the sea, like that lifeboat.

This day however, in a warm September, is the last of summer,
That's official, and in probable reality.
The light is sylvan, the breeze gentle, and the swell rhythmic.
And what a word that is, that...

... *s w e l l* ...

A deep Atlantic energy, rising and rolling in
Slow and silent from unfathomable Celtic fathoms,
Heaved dark up by unseen cliffs and continental shelf and submerged islands,
Now to gently lift and push us into the mysterious sea-filled canyons
Between Porth y Corwgi and Porth yr Hwangan
With just a few deft paddle strokes to help.

Y môr agored

Muscles and faces now warmed, our way is south and east across the sound,
Aiming right of Ynysoedd Gwylanod and its upright beacon
While being swept steady left into its angled rocks on a five knot tide that's falling fast.
The necessity is to judge three things correctly – no, now it's four;
One - the speed of this relentless sliding Atlantic tide-flow race,
Draining us sideways into those pincer and razor edges of Gwylanod.
Two - the rising wind pushing me and kayak towards clear and visible disaster;
Three - my slowing progress driving into the sea-spray of my straining effort;

And four; how tired I now am.

Yes, that's the fourth.....I am already tired,
And this is no screaming theme park ride with tested safe parameters,
No second queue-up chances here..... just to *stay* with expert Andy.....
As we finally hard-power-scrape around the most southern spikes of rock,
A rasping sprint of small margins, with both a second and an inch to spare.

Yr ynys

This island viewed from the shore is a single being,
But now reveals close-up to be a mangle of many rocks,
Of vicious shards, of long slate-knives, of wave-honed edges,
All towering tall and ready to serrate soft flesh,
Scour sinew from brittle bone, and to effortless slice at kayak plastic.
The drying ragged cormorants, even blacker now, crucified against this sky,
Look down from their rock shit-spattered ledges,
Hook-beaked, head-shaking, alert and beady-eyed. Waiting...

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Their water here is slacker; calm, silent, dark, and very deep;
Protected, like the lee-shelter of a dense field hedge in a wild gale;
That place where fragile midges might oblivious safely dance in sunlit stillness
While rattling swirling crows are nearby flung across stone walls
To somewhere else.

The turbulence meanwhile tugs and gurgles only a paddle's width away;
Malevolent welling spirals, spinning off, slopping over, sucking down,
Mark the flood, like a lava flow,
Heaving and falling over submerged outcrops and valleys,
Which from, underworld-invisible, this island rises,
Itself once a gentle rolling headland, grass-covered and flower-meadowed,
But now a resilient, black bedrocked barnacled and last-gasp knuckle;
Abrasive, scraping, and wet sea-weeded,
And chewed at, remorseless, by the flowing of this basalt sea.

Rested, we quietly weave our way between these monoliths,
Patient waiting at the ends of gullies for the wave to take us up and push us through.
And now, here we are, in the deep-secret wide interior lagoon,
Cliffed on three sides, a liquid chasm of bottomless glass-slab-still water,
Filled in and out and up and down from our slit-narrow channel open to a sunlit sky.

Yr anghenfil du

Sun on face, back into seat, rest, relax, lie, float, gently sway, drift, doze.....
The birds are gone very quiet; are watching something; cautious.....

And then, across a flickering day-dream,
A soft snort rises, right close, and very gentle.
And Andy, in hoarse whisper from over there.....
'Keep very very still, don't move..... '
And another snort, all bubbling wet,
Is followed by a deep and nasal inhalation, and now much closer,
And then, such a deep and heavy sigh; resigned ...now right beside me
And at my shoulder.

I, slowly turning, find us face to face, eyes level, wide and measuring.
A bull Atlantic seal has slipped in here and huge,
Like a great sleek dog waiting to be patted,
Or tossed a biscuit,
Is looking at me looking back at him;
His head is bucket-big and ebony sculpted,
So black; an absence of light with sun sucked-in.
His eyes are bright and rheumy and intent;
Curious, understanding, certainly intelligent ... and thinking.

We stare and he averts his gaze, but only momentarily, then back,
Locked into mine a second time;
Me in a fragile plastic boat
And him, thick muscle-necked, and watchful,
Standing in his element, in his medium, and knowing I am not in mine...at all.
Another deep breath, fishy; pink mouth, white needle teeth, comic whiskers;
And a slow blink of those beautiful eyes...
And what eyes they are...the things they see in that world beneath...
The forests, the valleys, the mountains, the plains ...the monsters...
Looking into mine which, born of the rising ground beyond his winter beach,
Are from a world away of which he has no concept,
Except perhaps ... for a glimmer-memory of when his distant forbears
Once roamed those doomed and vanished dragon-lands of Celtic Cymru.

And, curiosity then sated, he now slowly sinks.
Down and back, a black into the deeper black;
When with one last big belly-breath,
His nostrils close, his eyes slide shut and....

He is gone.
Not a ripple.

And even wide-eyed Andy, open-mouthed,
'Bloody Hell' says he..... 'Did you see that?'

Of course I did; I saw nothing else.

...And in my dreams

I see him still...

Jeff Teasdale, September 2022