

MARTHA'R MYNYDD ('Mountain Martha') (fl. c. 1770), an impostor

Pseudonym: Martha'r Mynydd, Mountain Martha

Gender: Female

Occupation: impostor

Area of activity: History and Culture

Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

who lived in a cottage near Llanllyfni, Caernarfonshire and is described as 'a voluble hypocrite.' She succeeded in persuading many people of that neighbourhood that she was familiar with 'a folk called The Invisibles' - a numerous and wealthy clan who frequented fairs and markets but were yet invisible. In particular, a gentleman named ' Mr. Ingram,' of this clan, lived in a magnificent (but invisible) mansion on the mountain, close to her cottage - ' Miss Ingram ' (his daughter) was indeed at times visible to mortal eyes, clad in white from head to foot; and her father preached, at dead of night, to gatherings in the darkness of Martha's cottage. It is probable that Martha's father was ' Mr. Ingram,' and pretty certain that Martha herself was ' Miss Ingram,' for on one occasion, when Martha had scalded her foot, a wily doubter trod on ' Miss Ingram 's' foot in one of these secret gatherings, and recognized Martha's voice in the cry of pain which followed - the sceptic, however, had to flee the countryside from her followers' rage. Still, doubts began to spread, and eventually Martha herself abandoned her frauds - she ended her life as an adherent of the Methodist cause at Llanllyfni.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Robert Jones (Rhoslan), *Drych yr Amseroedd (Trefriw 1820)*, 151-2

W. R. Ambrose, *Hynafiaethau, cofiannau, a hanes presennol Nant Nantlle y traethawd buddugol yn Eisteddfod Gadeiriol Pen-y-groes, Llun y Pasg, 1871 (1872)*, 60

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