

ASAPH (c. 600), reputed founder of the see of St Asaph

Name: Asaph
Parent: Sawyl Benuchel
Gender: Male
Occupation: reputed founder of the see of St Asaph
Area of activity: Religion
Author: John Edward Lloyd

He is only known through tradition. In the oldest form of ' Bonedd y Saint ' he appears as the son of Sawyl (Samuel) Benuchel and the grandson of Pabo Post Prydain; Penuchel (highbrow) may be a euphemism for Penisel (lowbrow), which is found in another early source.

Fragments of an early life were included in the ' Red Book of Asaph,' according to the transcripts of that MS., not one of which has yet been printed; apart from this, the only account of Asaph is that given in the life of **S. Kentigern**, written by Jocelin, a monk of Furness Abbey, about 1180. Jocelin assigns to **Kentigern** the distinction of being the prime founder of the monastic settlement on the banks of the Elwy, but adds (using the life of a younger saint) that among his favourite pupils was one Asaph, of noble birth, whom he singled out as his successor and who was accordingly consecrated bishop in his stead, when he returned to Strathclyde. Whatever may underlie this story, it is noteworthy that there is no local commemoration of **Cyndeyrn**, while Asaph's name is preserved in Llanasa, Pantasa, and Ffynnon Asa, all in northern Flintshire.

His festival day is 1 May; the *Breviary of Aberdeen* has an office for him. Nothing is known of the history of his see for several centuries; it reappears with the appointment of Gilbert as bishop in 1143. To the Welsh it has always been known as Llanelwy (hence the Latin ' Lanelvensis'), but about 1150 foreigners began to use what was for them the simpler form of S. Asaph.

Author

Sir **John Edward Lloyd**, (1861 - 1947)

Sources

Baring-Gould and John Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints: the saints of Wales and Cornwall and such Irish saints as have dedications in Britain*, 177-85

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Asaph](#)

Additional Links

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