

DEINIOL (died 584), saint, founder of Bangor and first bishop in Gwynedd

Name: Deiniol
Date of death: 584
Parent: Dwywei ferch Leennawg
Parent: Dunawd Bwr
Gender: Male
Occupation: saint, founder of Bangor and first bishop in Gwynedd
Area of activity: Religion
Author: John Williams James

son of **Dunawd** son of Pabo Post Prydyn, of the same royal line as Urien Rheged - Dwyai, daughter of Gwallog ap Lleenog was not his mother but his second cousin. As Deiniol and **Maelgwn Gwynedd** were contemporaries, so were his grandfather Pabo and the sons of **Cunedda Wledig**. Pabo, then, must have accompanied them to Wales, not because of any loss of territory but in order to acquire more. According to the place names his clan occupied Anglesey (Llanbabo), Caernarfonshire (Bangor), and the Vale of Clwyd (S. Asaph). This was why Cynfarch and Urien Rheged established themselves there between 550 and 574. The reign of **Maelgwn Gwynedd** was the golden age of religion in Gwynedd west of the Conway, being the age of **Cadfan**, **Seiriol**, **Cybi**, and others; the genealogies of the saints show that it was in the next generation, after the 'Yellow Pestilence' (547), that the up-surge of religion took place in Gwynedd east of the Conway. So, Bangor, Caernarfonshire, was Deiniol's first foundation and Bangor-is-coed, Flintshire, was its daughter. If the description given by **Gildas** to **Illtud** is correct - 'praeceptorem paene totius Britanniae magistrum elegantem' (36) - Deiniol was educated with **Maelgwn Gwynedd** at Llanilltud (Llantwit Major). We do not know by whom he was appointed and consecrated bishop, but according to the 'Life of Samson of Dol' this was done by the bishops of the Celtic Church and he was allowed to choose his own see - which was, doubtless, Gwynedd. If so, it is probable that the tradition preserved in the 'Book of Llandaf' attributing this to **Dyfrig** is probably correct: **Saint David** would have been too young at the time. There is no reason to doubt that Deiniol attended the synod of Brefi. According to the *Ann. C.* he died in 584, but it is possible that this date, like the dates given for the deaths of **David** and **Kentigern**, is twelve years later than it should be, in which case the correct date is 572.

Author

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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*ii, 326-31, for a summary of the medieval traditions about him

but, for the most part, these are late inventions and it is difficult to reconcile them with the genealogies in *Y Cymmrodor*, ix, 173-5

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Deiniol](#)

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