

EINION ap GWALCHMAI (fl. 1203-1223), poet

Name: Einion ap Gwalchmai
Spouse: Angharad ferch Ednyfed Fychan
Parent: Gwalchmai ap Meilyr
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet
Area of activity: Poetry
Author: David Myrddin Lloyd

A portion of an *awdl* by him to **Llywelyn ap Iorwerth** mentions that prince as fighting against the English, and was therefore probably composed after the turn of the century. He also composed a beautiful elegy to Nest, daughter of Hywel, of Towyn, Meirionnydd, and three *awdlau* to God. In one of these he refers to his intention to go on a pilgrimage over the Alps to the Holy Land. References in his poems indicate that he had been prominent in the courts of Welsh princes, but that after the 'service of chieftains' he felt drawn to the praising of God, and he states that 'blessed are monks in churches.' He wishes to end his days in Bardsey, and in another pious *awdl* there is the suggestion that he became a monk, for he sings, 'Let us keep the midnight devotions, according to the practice. Let us not sleep, let us chant the canonical prayers.' His religious poems, like his elegy to Nest, are melodious and graphic, and it is evident that in his day he was a popular poet. **Gwilym Ddu o Arfon** states (*The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales*, 277b) that his poems 'caught on' 'like a surging fountain.' Another indication of his popularity is to be found in the fact that he became a character in folk-lore. A tale is told of his having made a leap of fifty feet at Abernodwydd in the presence of his beloved when he was a young man, and according to another tale he went on pilgrimage, remained away from home for twenty-one years, and on returning immediately after the marriage of his wife (who, according to the story, was Angharad, daughter of **Ednyfed Fychan**), was recognized by her on playing the harp and producing half the wedding ring which he had kept. There is another tale of his being cured by 'Friar Gwryd' of a seven years' affliction. In an *englyn* in which part of the second tale is told, Einion is definitely described as the son of **Gwalchmai ap Meilyr**, and this is probably correct.

Author

David Myrddin Lloyd, (1909 - 1981)

Sources

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NLW Archives: **NLW MS 1553A** (542) and other manuscripts in N.L.W.

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John Rhys, *Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx, a review of Annals of the Magic Isle* (Oxford 1901)

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J. Lloyd-Jones, *The Court Poets of the Welsh Princes*

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Einion ap Gwalchmai](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q3399878](#)

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