

## GRUFFUDD ap MAREDUDD ap DAFYDD (fl. 1352-1382), an Anglesey poet

**Name:** Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** poet

**Area of activity:** Poetry

**Author:** William John Davies

whose entire work is contained in *R.B.H. Poetry columns 1198-1220 and 1313-36*. His name appears as part-owner of three townships in the commote of Talybolion, namely Aberalaw, Carneddawr and Dronwy, and he is represented in the genealogies as a descendant of Trahaearn Goch of Llŷn. Apart from a few ribald poems, his 2,500 odd lines of poetry divide themselves mainly into three classes according to their subject matter, namely religious poems, eulogistic and elegiac poetry, and love poetry. His *awdlau* to the Rood of Chester, to God, and to the Virgin Mary are fair examples of his adherence to the bardic traditions in both subject and mode of expression. His eulogies and elegies are addressed to the members of one family, namely **Tudur Fychan** (died 1367), Hywel fab Gronwy, Gronwy Fychan (died 1382), and **Syr Hywel y Fwyall** (died c. 1381), and he could be most aptly called the household or family bard of the **house of Penmynydd** (see under **Ednyfed Fychan**). It is not improbable that he composed the exceptional ode inviting **Owain Lawgoch** (Owain ap Thomas ap Rhodri) to recover his patrimony. He excels in his love poems. In one instance he makes for his beloved's home at Tref Lywarch on a 'breastplated steed' and urges it to make haste. His magnificent elegy to Gwenhwyfar o Fôn bears the characteristics of sincerity, and one may well believe that 'the privation of a long life without her' was the expression of a genuine and real experience. His mode of expression was the traditional metrical system of the *awdl*, but he was undoubtedly one of the first to introduce *englynion* at the beginning of an *awdl*. Though he was a contemporary of the early poets of the *cywydd* period, he refrained from using that metre. His special attribute is the skilful, sensible elegance expertly woven into such an intricate pattern.

### Author

**William John Davies**

### Sources

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