

HOPCYN ap TOMAS (c. 1330 -after 1403), gentleman

Name: Hopcyn ap Tomas
Date of birth: c. 1330
Date of death: 1403
Parent: Tomas ab Einion
Gender: Male
Occupation: gentleman
Area of activity: Land Ownership; Royalty and Society
Author: Griffith John Williams

living at Ynysdawy in the parish of Llangyfelach, Glamorganshire; son of Tomas ab Einion, i.e. the Einion who, **Iolo Morganwg** maintained, was **Einion Offeiriad**. **Iolo** wove all manner of stories about this family, making Hopcyn a bard and the author of romances, parables, grammars, etc.; what we have here is an attempt to explain the references to Hopcyn which are found in poem by bards of the 14th century 'Llyfr Coch Hergest' has five *awdlau* written to him; the contents of these poems show that he was not only one of the chief patrons of the bards in South Wales but also a man who interested himself in their craft and was a collector of Welsh manuscripts. In 1403, when **Owain Glyndŵr** was at Carmarthen, messengers were sent by the prince to fetch Hopcyn ap Tomas so that he might explain to **Owain** what light was shed on his fate by the old bardic prophecies. He was regarded as 'Maister of Brut,' i.e. as an authority on the old prophecies. Hopcyn ap Tomas is an excellent example of the cultured Welsh gentleman in the 14th century. In some 19th century works and in *Hopkyniaid Morganwg*, 1909, it is stated that Hopcyn ap Tomas was a member of the same family as the Hopkins of Llandyfodwg and the neighbouring districts (see **Hopkin**, **Lewis**). There is no foundation for this; **Iolo Morganwg** was responsible for that theory.

Author

Emeritus Professor Griffith John Williams, (1892 - 1963)

Sources

Hopkyniaid Morganwg (1909), 1909, 1-15

G. J. Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (1948), 1948, 9-14

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