

LESTYN ap GWRGANT (fl. c. 1081-1093), last independent ruler of Glamorgan

Name: Iestyn ap Gwrgant
Child: Goronwy ab Iestyn
Child: Gruffydd ab Iestyn
Child: Caradog ab Iestyn
Parent: Angharad ferch Ednowain ap Bleddyn
Parent: Gwrgant ab Ithel
Gender: Male
Occupation: last independent ruler of Glamorgan
Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements; Royalty and Society
Author: Ceinwen Hannah Thomas

Son of Gwrgant ab Ithel. Little is known with certainty about him. Cardiff seems to have been his seat of government, but the extent of his territory is unknown. He cannot have become supreme in Glamorgan until 1081, when **Caradog ap Gruffydd**, who ruled Glamorgan from c. 1075, was slain. In 1080, Iestyn was sufficiently insignificant to appear as a minor witness attesting a grant of land made to Llandaff by '**Caratocus rex morcannuc**.' Yet before his death, he was important enough to violate the sanctity of Llandaff, an act for which Iestyn had to atone by a grant of land. He founded the fifth royal tribe of Wales, and most of the noble families of Glamorgan claimed descent from him.

A famous story of Glamorgan, at least as old as the 15th century, associates the Norman conquest of Glamorgan with Iestyn's name. It describes how Iestyn, through his kinsman **Einion ap Collwyn**, a fugitive in England, secured Robert Fitzhamon's assistance against **Rhys ap Tewdwr**, whom he slew at Penrhys. Iestyn paid the Normans but refused **Einion**'s promised reward - his daughter in marriage. **Einion** recalled the departing Normans, who overthrew Iestyn, divided the lowlands amongst themselves, leaving only the hill country to the Welsh. Iestyn fled - to Keynsham Abbey, according to one version - where he died. Where this story touches known facts it is demonstrably wrong, e.g. Keynsham Abbey was not founded till 1169, while **Rhys** was slain near Brecon in Easter week 1093.

Author

Ceinwen Hannah Thomas

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Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Iestyn ap Gwrgant](#)

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