

## LEWIS GLYN CO THI or LLYWELYN Y GLYN (fl. 1447-1486), one of the greatest of the 15th century Welsh bards

**Name:** Lewis Glyn Cothi  
**Child:** Sion y Glyn  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** one of the greatest of the 15th century Welsh bards  
**Area of activity:** Poetry  
**Author:** Evan David Jones

He took his bardic name from that of the forest of Glyn Cothi, within the confines of which, probably, he was born, perhaps at Pwllcynbyd in the parish of Llanybydder. Early in life he became an outlaw in North Wales in company with **Owen ap Gruffudd ap Nicholas**. This may have been as early as 1443. The earliest certainly datable of his poems is his elegy upon the death of **Sir Griffith Vychan** of Guilsfield, in 1447. Like the children of **Gruffudd ap Nicholas**, he sided with the Lancastrian party in the Wars of the Roses, and **Jasper Tudor**, earl of Pembroke, and afterwards duke of Bedford, was his hero. He became an outlaw, on account of his devotion to **Jasper**, after the battle of Mortimer's Cross, 1461. This did not prevent him from singing to patrons who supported the Yorkists, and few poets broadcast eulogy so widely over Wales as he did. It is said that he settled at Chester, and that, having married a widow without the consent of the burgesses, he was ejected from the city. That something did happen to make him the laughing-stock of the citizens of Chester, and make them particular objects of his hate, is certain, but it is unsafe to build much upon bardic exercises, without independent corroborative evidence. His wife is not mentioned in his poems, but he had a son, John, who died at the age of 5.

He sang much to the gentry of Carmarthenshire, south Cardiganshire, and Radnorshire, and his best work is found in these poems. His zeal for **Jasper Tudor** was revived towards the end of his life, and, as was natural, vaticinary elements became more prominent in his poetry. None of his poems can be dated much later than c. 1486 or 1487, and it may be concluded that he died before 1490. There is a tradition that he was buried at Abergwili.

A considerable body of his poetry has survived in his own hand, and his manuscripts show that he was also versed in heraldry. He wrote a few columns in the 'Red Book of Hergest,' and the 'White Book of Hergest,' lost in a fire at a London bookbinder's shop early in the 19th century, is said to have been largely written by him. About 230 of his poems have been preserved. Of these 154 were printed in *The Poetical Works of Lewis Glyn Cothi*, published by the Society of Cymmrodorion under the editorship of **Walter Davies** (Gwallter Mechain) and **John Jones** (Tegid) in 1837. His entire works are now being issued in three volumes (vol. i, 1953) by the co-operation of the National Library of Wales and the University of Wales Press Board.

### Author

**Evan David Jones**, (1903 - 1987)

### Sources

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

NLW Archives: Peniarth MS 40: Llyfr Calan

NLW Archives: Peniarth MS 70: Barddoniaeth Lewys Glyn Cothi

NLW Archives: Peniarth MS 109: Barddoniaeth Lewys Glyn Cothi

'*Llyfr Coch Hergest*' (*Jesus College MS. cxi*)

NLW Archives: Llanstephan MS 7: *The poetical works of Lewis Glyn Cothi, Ieuan Brechfa and others*

E. D. Jones (ed.), *The poetical works of Lewis Glyn Cothi* (Oxford 1837), 1953

### Further Reading

NLW Archives: Peniarth MS 77: Barddoniaeth Lewys Glyn Cothi

Wikipedia Article: [Lewys Glyn Cothi](#)

## Additional Links

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Wikidata: [Q730668](#)

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