

LEWYS MORGANNWG (fl. 1520-1565), the bardic name of LLYWELYN ap RHISIART, 'Chief Bard of the Three Provinces', and one of the most notable poets in the history of Glamorgan

Name: Llywelyn ap Rhisiart
Pseudonym: Lewys Morgannwg
Parent: Rhisiart ap Rhys Brydydd
Gender: Male
Occupation: Chief Bard of the Three Provinces', and one of the most notable poets in the history of Glamorgan
Area of activity: History and Culture; Poetry
Author: Evan John Saunders

He was a Glamorgan man by birth and his home was at Llantwit Major. His first patron, **Sir Edward Stradling** (see the article on the family), lived in the near-by castle of S. Donats, while his friend **Iorwerth Fynglwyd** also lived in the same neighbourhood. In an elegy to **Tudur Aled** he acknowledges him to have been his teacher in the art of poetry, and his use of *cynganedd* was smooth, accurate, and in accordance with the celebrated principles laid down by his master. As one of the last - if, indeed, he was not the very last - Welsh poets of the Roman Catholic faith, there is a special interest in his devotional poems. He sang very devoutly to the Rood at Llan-faes and Llangynwyd, and also to the Virgin of Pen-rhys when Pen-rhys attracted thousands of pilgrims. As the writing of poems on the lives of the saints was traditional among the chief bards, he too wrote a poem on **Illtud**, the patron saint of his native district. But it was to **Lleision**, the last abbot of Neath, that he wrote his great *awdl* in the twenty-four metres which gives a vivid contemporary picture of monastic life in all its glory.

The poems addressed by Lewys Morgannwg to his many patrons are of exceptional value to the historian because he wrote at a time of revolutionary changes in religion, law, and society. As the family poet of the **Herberts** he came into contact with the family which filled most of the important posts under the new dispensation. In the poems he addressed to them it is easy to see the attraction which the Court at London had for those who were the mainstay of Welsh literature and culture and to observe how the interests of the aristocracy were being tightly bound to the throne by the gift of appointments and monastic possessions. In an elegy written to Rhys ap Siôn of Glyn Neath we hear a murmur of opposition to the English influences which were gradually spreading over Glamorgan and Gwent.

Author

Evan John Saunders

Sources

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'Gweithiau Lewys Morgannwg' by E. J. Saunders (unpublished)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 60: Barddoniaeth](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 64: Barddoniaeth](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 66: Barddoniaeth](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 76: Cerddi serch](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 77: Barddoniaeth Lewis Glyn Cothi](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 80: Barddoniaeth](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 83: Barddoniaeth](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 96: The poetical works of Lewys Dwnn](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 97: Barddoniaeth](#)

NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 99: Cywyddau ac odlau Guto'r Glyn](#)

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NLW Archives: [Peniarth MS 114: Cywyddau i Lewis Gwynn](#)

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NLW Archives: [Llanstephan MS 6: Poetry by Dafydd ap Gwilym, &c.](#)

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G. J. Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (1948) (introduction)

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Lewys Morgannwg](#)

Additional Links

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