

POWEL, ANTHONY (c. 1560 - 1618/19), gentleman and genealogist

Name: Anthony Powel
Date of birth: c. 1560
Date of death: 1618/19
Gender: Male
Occupation: gentleman and genealogist
Area of activity: History and Culture; Royalty and Society
Author: Griffith John Williams

of Llwydarth, in the parish of Llangynwyd, Glamorganshire. The surname 'Powel' was first adopted by his father and his uncles; their descendants formed the Powels of Tir Iarll and the surrounding districts. We know little of Anthony Powel but it is probable that he was the person of that name who acted as steward to the Mansel family of Margam. It is clear that, like so many other members of the family, he was interested in literature; **Lewis Dwnn** names him among the gentlemen who showed him 'hen Regords a llyfrau y tai o grefydd' ('old records and books from the religious houses') and as a man who had written 'am holl ynys Brydain' ('about the whole isle of Britain'); the reference, clearly, is to genealogical work. The only manuscript of his which is extant today (as far as is known) is 'Llyfr Du Pantylliwydd' (N.L.W. Llanover MS. E 3), which contains genealogies and the material usually found in the books by heraldic genealogists; this manuscript is in all probability, in his hand. **Iolo Morganwg**, however, attributed to him all manner of things - a 'brut' (or chronicle), a history of eisteddfodau, triads, a history of the bards of Glamorgan, etc. **Iolo** maintained also that Powel was a bard and one of the earliest Unitarians in the county. It is probable that it was the reference to him in the manuscript **Lewis Dwnn's** *Visitations* which caused **Iolo** to make him such an important character in these forgeries.

Author

Emeritus Professor Griffith John Williams, (1892 - 1963)

Sources

T. C. Evans, *History of Llangynwyd Parish, with Illustrations* (Llanelly 1887), 3, 182-4

G. J. Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (1948), 1948, 214-8

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