

RHYDDERCH HAEL (or HEN), king of Alclyde (Dumbarton, near Glasgow) ▾

Name: Rhydderch Hael (Or Hen)

Parent: Tudwal Tudelyd ap Clynnog ap Dyfnwal Hen

Gender: Male

Occupation: king of Alclyde (Dumbarton, near Glasgow)

Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements; Royalty and Society

Author: Thomas Jones

Son of Tudwal Tudclyd ap Clynnog ap Dyfnwal Hen (Harl. MS. 3859; *Cymm.*, ix, 173). According to the Saxon genealogies, Rhydderch Hen fought along with Urien (Rheged), Gwallawg, and Morgant against Hussa, king of Northumbria, c. 590. Adamnan (624 - 704) in his 'Life of S. Columba' states that he was king of Alclyde (Dumbarton, near Glasgow) and that he was a friend of S. Columba (521 - 597). These are the only references to him in early documents. According to Jocelyn's 'Life of S. Kentigern,' **Saint Kentigern** and Rhydderch died in the same year, but the date is not known.

Rhydderch figures in traditional tales, and there are references to him in the Merlin poems (*Black Book of Carmarthen*, 49. 16, 50. 3, 52. 11, 56. 16, 57. 16). He is also referred to as the victor in the battle of Arfderydd, which was fought, according to Harl. MS. 3859 (*Cymm.*, ix, 155) in 573. In the triads he is named as one of the 'three liberal ones of the Island of Britain' (*The Myvyrian Archaeology of Wales*, 389), his court is said to have been devastated by Aidan, king of the Scots, 574-606 (*ibid.*, 391), and 'Drudlwyd' is given as the name of his steed (*Black Book of Carmarthen*, 28. 5). According to the *Black Book of Carmarthen*, 64. 8-9, he was buried at Aber-erch; but this must be a late saga tradition.

Author

Professor Thomas Jones

Sources

References above

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Canu Llywarch Hen (1935), xxi-xxv

Further Reading

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