

RHYS GOCH ERYRI (fl. early 15th century), poet, of Beddgelert.

Name: Rhys Goch Eryri
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet
Area of activity: Poetry
Author: Ifor Williams

Perhaps he was 'un o'r rhai gorau ieuainc' ('one of the best of the young ones') mentioned in 'Cywydd y Cwest' by **Gruffudd Llwyd** (1385?). The reading there is not quite certain, but one can rely on Rhys Goch Eryri's own elegy to **Gruffudd Llwyd ap Dafydd ab Einion** where he refers to the latter as 'athro' ('teacher') and says that he was almost of the same age as himself. **Llywelyn ap Moel y Pantri** imagined that there was a slur on Powys in that elegy and attacked Rhys eloquently. The latter replies 'Rhy hen wyf, a rhy fab wyd' ('I am too old, and thou art too young') and that confirms that he and **Gruffydd** were almost contemporaries. Howsoever, he survived **Llywelyn** and wrote an elegy to him also, referring in this to an eclipse of the moon occurring at the time of his death. It may be suggested that this refers to the total eclipse of the sun which took place on 3 February 1440, followed by a lunar eclipse on the 18th of the same month. There is attributed to Rhys an elegy to **Meredydd ap Cynwrig** of Anglesey who died in 1448 or a little earlier. It is hardly likely that Rhys himself lived much longer and so his period of activity as a bard may be said to range from about 1385 to 1448. He was buried at Beddgelert. According to tradition he lived at Hafod Garegog, and his own references in his poems to Snowdonia confirm that his home was in that mountainous region. According to **J. E. Griffith** (*Pedigrees ...*, 199, *sub* Hafod Garegog) he was Rhys ap Dafydd ap Iorwerth ab Evan Llwyd ap Rhirid, but according to B.M. Add. MS. 14866 (511), Gwynedd MS. 3 (161), and **Peniarth MS 112** (815) the lineage was as follows - 'ap Dafydd ab Ieuan Llwyd.'

His *cywyddau* to **Gwilym ap Gruffydd** of Penrhyn, **Sir William Thomas** of Raglan, and **William Fychan ap Gwilym** of Penrhyn, can be dated fairly easily. No poem by him to **Owain Glyn Dŵr** has been preserved, although there are suggestions in his poems to members of the **Penrhyn** family that his sympathies were with the adherents of **Glyn Dŵr**. Even if he did sing to the prince's adherents, it was more discreet for their sakes, in the time of oppression which followed in the wake of the war, not to give them prominence. His *cywydd* to **Beuno** is interesting; of still more interest is his bardic 'controversy' with **Llywelyn ap y Moel** and his reply to **Siôn Cent**'s satire on 'Yr Awen Gelwyddog' ('the lying muse'). His *cywydd* to a beard is also in the bardic tradition but it contains no chronological references. One must distrust the authorship of the *cywydd* 'i'r Faslat' because of the reference to Powys contained in it, the same applies to the *cywydd* to **Sir Gruffydd Fychan**, and for the same reason - and because of the uncertainty of the manuscripts on the matter. The same is true of the *cywydd* urging a fox to kill **Dafydd Nanmor**'s peacock; his satiric *awdl* to another fox ('Mady'n Iwynogyn') can, however, be regarded as authentic.

Author

Sir Ifor Williams, (1881 - 1965)

Sources

See the article **Dafydd Nanmor**

H. Lewis, Thomas Roberts, Ifor Williams (eds), *Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill, 1350â€“1450* (Bangor 1925), xxxviii-liii, 157-86, 301-38

Gorchestion Beirdd Cymru (1773, 1864), 92-8

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: **Rhys Goch Eryri**

Additional Links

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