

CADWALADR (died 1172), prince

Name: Cadwaladr
Date of death: 1172
Spouse: Alice de Clare
Child: Cadfan ap Cadwaladr
Parent: Angharad ferch Owain ab Edwin
Parent: Gruffudd ap Cynan
Gender: Male
Occupation: prince
Area of activity: Military; Politics, Government and Political Movements; Royalty and Society
Author: John Edward Lloyd

He was the third son of [Gruffudd ap Cynan](#) (died 1137) and his wife [Angharad](#). He is first heard of in 1136, when, on the death of [Richard Fitz Gilbert](#), lord of Ceredigion, his elder brother, [Owain Gwynedd](#), and he invaded the province and took the five northern castles, including Aberystwyth. At the end of the year they returned with a large force of mail-clad knights and foot soldiers and swept over the south of the region, defeating the foreign settlers in a battle at Crug Mawr, not far from Cardigan. Cardigan town was sacked, but the castle, which could be reinforced by sea, was not taken. In 1137 the two brothers completed their conquest by the capture of castles in the east and south of Ceredigion; a bold push across the Teify also gave them Carmarthen. This was the limit of their success; in 1138 they failed, even with the aid of a Danish flotilla, to break down the persistence of the garrison of Cardigan, and Cadwaladr was content to reap the fruits of victory and to occupy northern Ceredigion as his share of the spoil. A little later he appears in a somewhat surprising light as an ally of earl Randolph II of Chester in the attack upon Lincoln of 2 February 1141, which resulted in the sack of the town and the capture of king Stephen. But this was no blind adventure; it must be connected with Cadwaladr's marriage to Alice de Clare, daughter of [Fitz Gilbert](#) - an alliance clearly intended to strengthen his hold upon Ceredigion and one which made him earl Randolph's nephew. A serious crime in 1143 led to a rupture with his brother. He allowed his retinue treacherously to murder the South Welsh leader, [Anarawd ap Gruffydd](#), and thus incurred the just wrath of [Owain](#), who bade his son [Hywel](#) expel him from Ceredigion. Cadwaladr found refuge in Ireland and there secured the help of the Danes of Dublin, who in 1144 brought a fleet to Abermenai to reinstate him. But here there was a change of front; Cadwaladr escaped from the custody of his allies ('blinded' is a mistranslation of the Brut by [Ab Ithel](#)) and was reconciled to his brother, who drove off the invaders.

Trouble still beset him. In 1147 his nephews, [Hywel](#) and [Cynan](#), entered Meirionnydd, the one from the south and the other from the north, and attacked his castle of Cynfail, held loyally for him by Morfran, head of the neighbouring 'clas' of Towyn. They were successful and in another two years Cadwaladr gave up his share of Ceredigion, with his new castle of Llanrhystud, to his son Cadfan. Finally, there was in 1152 a fresh quarrel with [Owain](#), which led to his expulsion from Anglesey and a five years exile in England. His English connections now stood him in good stead. It is known that he attested, as 'Welsh,' or 'North Welsh King,' charters executed by earl Randolph in favour of the abbeys of Chester and of Shrewsbury and later, when Henry II came to the throne, he was provided with honourable maintenance at Ness in Shropshire.

Exile ended in 1157, when Henry invaded Gwynedd and secured as a condition of peace the return of Cadwaladr to his former standing. Henceforth, he ceased to pursue personal ends and is found acting with his fellow princes of the North. He was one of the coalition of northerners and English earls who in 1159 attempted in vain to subdue [Rhys ap Gruffydd](#). He stood at the side of his brother in the great assembly of Welsh chiefs at Corwen in 1165 and aided him in the capture in 1167 of the castles of Rhuddlan and Prestatyn.

Cadwaladr survived [Owain](#) and died 29 February 1172. He was buried in Bangor cathedral and [Gerald of Wales](#) saw in 1188 the double tomb of the two brothers in the wall of the presbytery, near the high altar. He mentions Cadwaladr as a prince of lavish generosity; the only evidence of this is his gift of the church of Nevin to Haughmond abbey by a charter witnessed by his wife and earl Randolph.

Author

Sir John Edward Lloyd, (1861 - 1947)

Sources

J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest* (London 1911), 464, 466, 471-6, 489-91, 496, 500, 504, 511, 516, 520, 550

Giraldi Cambrensis Opera (1861–91), vi, 133, 145

Antiquities of Shropshire (1854–60), x, 257

Cartulary of the Abbey of St. Werburgh, Chester (1920–3), 59

Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1860, 333

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Cadwaladr ap Gruffydd](#)

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