

CARADOG of LLANCARFAN (fl. 1135), man of letters

Name: Caradog
Gender: Male
Occupation: man of letters
Area of activity: Literature and Writing; Scholarship and Languages
Author: John Edward Lloyd

He is best known from the reference at the end of 'The History of the Kings of Britain' by [Geoffrey of Monmouth](#). Writing about 1135, [Geoffrey](#) allows Caradog to use as literary material the story of the kings who ruled in Wales after 689, when he closes his detailed narrative, and similarly gives leave to William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon to recite the history of the English kings. The conjunction of names shows that Caradog was a Welshman of the time who had some literary reputation. But there is nothing to show that he ever carried it the programme thus indicated for him. That he did so in the earlier annals of 'Brut y Tywysogion' was not asserted until the 16th cent; the internal evidence, indeed, tells strongly against such an assumption.

So far as can be gathered, his real activity lay in a quite different direction. At the end of a life of [Gildas](#) in a 12th century Cambridge manuscript, Caradoc of Nancarban (the correct form, which became Llan carfan under foreign influence) declares himself in Latin verse to be the author and the same couplet occurs in a recently discovered life of [Cadog](#). The latter, concerned with the patron saint of Llanccarfarn, would come naturally from a writer who drew his origin from that sanctuary; the former also shows intimate knowledge of the place and its traditions, but is signalized also by a warm interest in the abbey of Glastonbury, which suggests that Caradog, after the misfortunes which befell Llanccarfarn under Norman rule, migrated to a more hospitable dime across the Bristol Channel.

Nothing is otherwise known of the details of his career; that he died in 1156 rests at present upon no better authority than David Powel's *Historie*, 1584.

Author

Sir John Edward Lloyd, (1861 - 1947)

Sources

J. E. Lloyd, 'The Welsh Chronicles' in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xiv

J. S. P. Tatlock in *Speculum a journal of mediaeval studies*, xiii, 139-52

Antiquity, xix, 94-5

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Caradoc of Llanccarfarn](#)

Additional Links

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Wikidata: [Q634827](#)

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