

GRUFFYDD ap LLYWELYN (died 1244), prince

Name: Gruffydd ap Llywelyn
Date of death: 1244
Spouse: Senena ferch Caradog
Child: Gwladus ferch Gruffudd ap Llywelyn
Child: Rhodri ap Gruffydd
Child: Owain ap Gruffydd
Child: Llywelyn ap Gruffudd
Child: Dafydd ap Gruffydd
Parent: Tangwystl ferch Llywarch Goch
Parent: Llywelyn ap Iorwerth
Gender: Male
Occupation: prince
Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements; Royalty and Society
Author: Thomas Jones Pierce

Natural son of **Llywelyn ap Iorwerth** by Tangwystl, daughter of Llywarch Goch of Rhos. He was born sometime before his father's marriage to **Joan** in 1206. The first reference to him is as one of the hostages handed over to John in 1211; he was still a prisoner in August 1213, but was released as part of the general settlement of 1215. Irrresponsible and headstrong, Gruffydd openly resented the fact that his half-brother (**Dafydd ap Llywelyn**), was intended to be **Llywelyn's** sole successor, an injustice which, in mediaeval Wales, an acknowledged son, though illegitimate by normal standards, could challenge with reasonable hope of public support. It was not **Llywelyn's** intention, however, to exclude him entirely, if he proved co-operative, from some share of power. Although he suffered a long term of imprisonment at Degannwy from 1228 to 1234, after having been deprived of the lordships of Arduwy and Merioneth, he was eventually made lord of Llŷn and given the extensive appanage of Upper Powys, in **Llywelyn's** hands since the death of **Gwenwynwyn**.

It was **Dafydd** himself, during his father's last enfeebled years, who struck a final blow for the principles of legitimacy and primogeniture, stripping Gruffydd of all his territories and imprisoning him and **Owain ap Gruffydd**, his eldest son, at Criccieth. This last event occurred in the period just before **Llywelyn** died (April 1240) or immediately afterwards. On 12 August 1241, Senena, Gruffydd's wife, entered into an agreement with Henry III, arranging for her husband's release and restoration. When, a fortnight later, **Dafydd** was obliged to submit to the king at Gwern Eigrion, the first part only of the agreement was fulfilled, for Gruffydd was now made a prisoner in the Tower of London where for over three years he spent an easy confinement in the company of his wife and some of their children, a pawn in the game of Anglo-Welsh politics. His attempt to escape on 1 March 1244 had a fatal ending. He had four sons - **Owain Goch**, **Llywelyn**, **Dafydd** and Rhodri - and one daughter, Gwladus, who married Rhys ap Rhys Mechyll. In 1248 his remains were conveyed to Wales and laid to rest at Aberconway.

Author

Professor Thomas Jones Pierce, (1905 - 1964)

Sources

J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*(London 1911), Vol. I

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Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Littere Wallie (1940)

Calendar of Ancient Correspondence concerning Wales (1935)

Further Reading

NLW Archives: Wynnstay Estate Records: Charters of the Abbey of Ystrad Marchell: Confirmation by Gruffudd ap Llywelyn of previous charters, 1226

Wikipedia Article: [Gruffydd ap Llywelyn Fawr](#)

Additional Links

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