

GRUFFYDD LLWYD, Sir, more fully GRUFFYDD ap RHYS ap GRUFFYDD ab EDNYFED (died 1335), traditional hero of a supposed Welsh revolt in 1322

Name: Gruffydd Llwyd
Date of death: 1335
Spouse: Gwenllian ferch Cynan ap Maredudd
Child: Ieuan ap Gruffydd Llwyd
Parent: Rhys ap Gruffydd ap Ednyfed
Gender: Male
Occupation: traditional hero of a supposed Welsh revolt in 1322
Area of activity: Anti Establishment; Military; Politics, Government and Political Movements
Author: John Goronwy Edwards

Great-grandson of [Llywelyn ap Iorwerth](#)'s seneschal [Ednyfed Fychan](#). He is described in Welsh pedigrees as lord of Tregarnedd in Anglesey and of Dinorwig in Caernarfonshire; he also held lands at Twynan and elsewhere in north Denbighshire, at Llansadwrn in Carmarthenshire and Llanrhystud in Cardiganshire; Tregarnedd and the Denbigh lands he inherited from his father Rhys ap Gruffydd, who died early in 1284; Llanrhystud came to him from his uncle [Sir Hywel ap Gruffydd](#), who perished in the disaster at 'the bridge of Anglesey' in November 1282. Llwyd's immediate antecedents were strongly Anglophile; both his father and his uncle [Hywel](#) had been active and trusted supporters of Edward I in the Welsh war of 1282-4; he himself joined queen Eleanor's household, and in 1283 was admitted as a yeoman of the king's own household. He remained true to this loyalist upbringing: he was already a knight when in 1301 he did homage to Edward of Caernarvon as the new prince of Wales, and he became a member of the prince's household. Ten years after his own death, Gruffydd was still spoken of in North Wales as 'a man of the court.'

From 1297 to 1314 he was in effect the king's continual commissioner of array in North Wales: he repeatedly raised contingents of Welshmen for service in Flanders or Scotland, and himself served in both those theatres of war. He was the first Welshman to be extensively employed as sheriff in North Wales, in Caernarvonshire 1301-5, in Anglesey 1305-6, again in Caernarfonshire 1308-10, and in Merionethshire 1314-16 and again 1321-7. He was also forester of North Wales 1307-17. Edward of Caernarvon, both as prince and as king, put great trust in him. When in 1321, in one of the recurrent crises of his reign, Edward found himself faced by a hostile coalition of Marcher barons led by [Roger de Mortimer](#) of Chirk, then justice of Wales, he ordered Gruffydd Llwyd to raise troops in North Wales and link up with the king's suppressing any rebels on his way. Accordingly, in January 1322, Gruffydd attacked and captured a number of castles, including Holt, Welshpool and [Mortimer's](#) stronghold of Chirk, whereupon the [Mortimers](#) submitted to Edward without further resistance. It was this campaign of Gruffydd's that came to be traditionally misunderstood as a revolt against the king's officers in Wales: in reality, Gruffydd acted in the closest concert with the king, and by capturing Chirk did him a crowning service. He remained a consistent partisan of Edward II to the end: in 1327 he evaded appearing as one of the Merionethshire representatives in the Parliament which saw the final formalities of the king's overthrow, and one of the last references to him in the records shows him in 1331 associated with persons who had evidently favoured the execution of Edward's old enemy [Mortimer](#) in the previous year.

Sir Gruffydd Llwyd died shortly before 12 July 1335. His heir was his son Ieuan, and he also had (according to Welsh pedigrees) seven daughters of his marriage with Gwenllian, daughter of Cynan ap Maredudd.

Author

Sir John Goronwy Edwards, (1891 - 1976)

Sources

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