

## GWERFUL MECHAIN (1462? - 1500), poetess

**Name:** Gwerful Mechain  
**Date of birth:** 1462?  
**Date of death:** 1500  
**Parent:** Hywel Fychan  
**Gender:** Female  
**Occupation:** poetess  
**Area of activity:** Poetry  
**Author:** Leslie Harries

All that is known of her is that she was the daughter of Hywel Fychan of Mechain in Powys, confirmation of which is to be found in a *cywydd* written by [Dafydd Llwyd](#), who sent [Llywelyn ap Gutun](#) to her with an expression of his love. It is known that bits of her poems were still preserved in the memory of country folk as late as the 19th century, for both [Ap Vychan](#) and [Sir Owen M. Edwards](#) refer to this. In *Eminent Welshmen* and *Enwogion Cymru* she is confused with Gwerful, daughter of Madoc of Tanad; [Guto'r Glyn](#)'s poems were not addressed to Gwerful Mechain. Gwerful Mechain's poems were born of the whim of the moment; she wrote a beautiful *cywydd* on the passion of Christ; she produced an occasional striking *englyn* and she was deeply moved by jealous wives, and scurrilous poets such as [Ieuan Dyfi](#) and [Llywelyn ap Gutun](#), whom she castigated with broad and biting humour.

### Author

Leslie Harries, (1901 - 1988)

### Sources

Leslie Harris, 'Barddoniaeth Huw Cae Llwyd' (an unpublished dissertation, 1933, now in the N.L.W.)

### Further Reading

Katie Gramich (ed.), *The works of Gwerful Mechain* (Broadview Press 2018)

Lauren Cocking, [On the Gleeefully Indecent Poems of a Medieval Welsh Feminist Poet](#), Literary Hub, (accessed August 2019)

Wikipedia Article: [Gwerful Mechain](#)

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q5623555](#)

**Published date:** 1959

**Article Copyright:** <http://rightsstatements.org/page/InC/1.0/> 

The Dictionary of Welsh Biography is provided by The National Library of Wales and the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. It is free to use and does not receive grant support. A donation would help us maintain and improve the site so that we can continue to acknowledge Welsh men and women who have made notable contributions to life in Wales and beyond.

Find out more on our [sponsorship page](#).

