

GWYNLLYW (Gundleius, Gunlyu), saint, fl. late 5th-early 6th century

Name: Gwynllyw
Spouse: Gwladys ferch Brychan
Child: Cemmeu ap Gwynllyw
Child: Bugi ap Gwynllyw
Child: Cynidr ap Gwynllyw
Child: Cadog
Parent: Guaul ferch Ceredig ap Cunedda
Parent: Glywys
Gender: Male
Occupation: saint
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Hywel David Emanuel

was the son of Glywys, ruler of the kingdom of Glywysing which extended over parts of eastern Carmarthenshire, Glamorganshire, and Monmouthshire. Gwynllyw's mother was Guaul, daughter of **Ceredig ap Cunedda**. The oldest source for the details of his life is the 'Life of S. Cadoc,' composed in the main towards the end of the 11th century. The 'Life of S. Gwynllyw' and the 'Life of S. Tatheus,' which are the other main authorities for his legend, are 12th century compositions. A summary version of the 'Life of S. Gwynllyw' was composed by John of Teignmouth in the mid 14th century. An early 14th century manuscript recently discovered at Gotha, Germany, contains the pedigree of Gwynllyw (see *Anal. Boll.*, lviii, 98). As the eldest of the ten sons of Glywys (the 'Life of S. Gwynllyw' gives the number as seven), Gwynllyw inherited the principal seat of his father's kingdom, namely, the territory lying between the rivers Usk and Rhymney, which was called 'Gwynlwg' ('Wentloog') after him. His youthful exploits in battle earned him the epithet 'milwr' (warrior). He married Gwladys, daughter of **Brychan Brycheiniog** (against her father's will, according to the 'Life of S. Cadoc') and there was born to them a son, **Cadoc**, who became one of the most renowned of Welsh saints. The older genealogies name Bugi and Cemmeu also as sons of Gwynllyw. Admonished by **Cadoc**, Gwynllyw and Gwladys forsook their worldly position and embraced the hermit's life, living at first in neighbouring cells, later in widely-separated localities. The 'Life of S. Gwynllyw' states that both **Cadoc** and **Dubricius** attended Gwynllyw on his deathbed, and administered the last sacrament to him. The church of S. Woolos and the parish of Pilgwenlly in Newport still bear his name. Two chapels named after Gwynllyw formerly stood in the parishes of Llanelly and Llanegwad, Carmarthenshire 29 March is his feast-day. Gwynllyw is not to be confused with Gwynlleu, patron of Nantcwnlle, Cardiganshire.

Author

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Sources

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Further Reading

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