

MERRICK, RICE (RHYS MEURUG) (died 1586-7), a landed gentleman, genealogist, and historian

Name: Rice Merrick
Date of death: 1586-7
Child: Barbara Button (née Merrick)
Parent: Meurug ap Hywel ap Phylip ap Dafydd ap Phylip Hir
Gender: Male
Occupation: landed gentleman, genealogist, and historian
Area of activity: History and Culture; Land Ownership; Royalty and Society
Author: Griffith John Williams

He lived at Cottrell in the parish of S. Nicholas in the Vale of Glamorgan. According to his contemporary, [Dafydd Benwyn](#), he was the son of Meurug ap Hywel ap Phylip ap Dafydd ap Phylip Hir, of the line of Caradog Freichfras. He was appointed by the [earl of Pembroke](#) as Clerk of the Peace in Glamorgan. He died in 1 March 1586/7 and was buried in Cowbridge church. Two elegies to him were sung, the one by [Dafydd Benwyn](#) (Cardiff MS. 2, 277, 344-6) and the other by [Sils ap Siôn](#) ('Llyfr Hir Llanharan,' 319). His main interest was in the history of Glamorgan and he was assiduous in his search for documents of every kind, Latin and Welsh. In [J. M. Traherne](#), *Stradling Correspondence*, 1840, 167-8, is a letter which he sent to [Sir Edward Stradling](#) of S. Donat's, which shows that these two historians collaborated. He wrote a book on the history of Glamorgan, and [Iolo Morganwg](#) says that he saw it in the library at Hafod, Cardiganshire. It can, therefore, be assumed that this was one of the volumes lost when that library went on fire in 1807. A copy made c. 1660-80 is in the library of the Queen's College, Oxford; this copy was published by [Sir Thomas Phillipps](#) at his private press, Middle Hill, in 1825 (2nd ed. by [J. A. Corbett](#), 1887). A second copy, made c. 1674-5, is in the Cardiff Public Library. The book is entitled *[A Book of Glamorganshire Antiquities](#)*^[?], and it is said to have been completed in 1578. As will be seen, the work is in English, and it is divided into three parts. In the first part, the characteristics of the region are described; in the second is shown how the country was divided among the Norman knights and what lands were assigned to the original Welsh families; in the third the author describes Glamorgan as it was in his time. Nevertheless, we do not possess the author's final manuscript, because he refers to portions of the work not found now in the two extant manuscripts, and only a portion of the third part is available. It is more than likely that a substantial portion of that part has been preserved in one of [Edward Lhuyd](#)'s manuscripts and is published in *Parochialia* III (1911), 116-47. It can be surmised that Merrick wrote this part c. 1584-5; it contains particulars of the rivers and streams, of the old houses of the landed families, and of the parishes and the lands. Although the author made use of documents which have since been lost, when he wrote the first two sections, it is his description of the region as it was in his own time which makes his work of interest to us today. He is, undoubtedly, the most important of the older historians of Glamorgan. He makes occasional references to other works which he compiled, such as a history of Wales and a history of the bishopric of Llandaff, but no copies of them are extant. He was also a famous genealogist and formed a large collection of pedigrees. References to him and extracts from his collection are to be found in some genealogical manuscripts.

Author

Emeritus Professor Griffith John Williams, (1892 - 1963)

Sources

A Booke of Glamorganshires Antiquities (London 1887), iii-vii

G. J. Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (1948), 203-14

Llên Cymru, i, (1950), 48

Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1890, 321-2

Further Reading

T. J. Hopkin, '[Rice Merrick \(Rhys Meurug\) of Cottrell](#),' *Morgannwg*, VIII, 5-13

Wikipedia Article: [Rhys Meurug](#)

Gweithiau


Rice Merrick, *[Morganiae Archaïographia: A book of Glamorganshire antiquities](#)* (Broadway 1825)

Additional Links

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