

## POWELL, DAVID (Dewi Nantbrân; died 1781), Franciscan friar

**Name:** David Powell  
**Pseudonym:** Dewi Nantbrân  
**Date of death:** 1781  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Franciscan friar  
**Area of activity:** Religion  
**Author:** Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born, according to general opinion, at Abergavenny, though some incline to attribute his origins to the neighbourhood of Brecon. He was at the Franciscan convent at Douai. On his return to Wales (1740) he attached himself to the Franciscan house of Perth-hir, Monmouth - it should, however, be stated that he seems not to have been in any way related to the ' Powell of Perth-hir ' family which is incidentally mentioned in the article on the [Vaughan](#) family of Courtfield. The friary at Perth-hir served the Roman Catholic chapel at Abergavenny, and Powell (known in religion as ' Brother Gregory ') was praeses of that chapel at various dates between 1740 and 1767. He is found (21 July 1778) signing at Abergavenny a declaration of loyalty to the Crown ([Bradney](#), *Monmouthshire*, I, ii, 194); and it was at Abergavenny that he died, 12 October 1781. He published in 1764 a Welsh catechism, *Catechism Byrr o'r Athrawiaeth Ghristnogol; er Addysc ysprydol, i Blant; a'r Werinos Anwybodus trwy Gymru oll. O Gasgliad Dewi Nantbrân Off. O.S.F.* And there can be little doubt that, over the initials 'D.P.,' he was the author of two other books. The first (in 1764 again) was *Sail yr Athrawiaeth Gatholic*. The second (1776) was *Allwydd y Nef. O gasgliad D.P. Off.*, an adaptation of *Allwydd Paradwys* (1670) by [John Hughes](#) (1615 - 1686). Powell's editor, [John Fisher](#), shows that Powell's Welsh is much better than that of *Allwydd Paradwys*.

### Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

### Sources

Joseph Gillow, *A Literary and Biographical History or Biographical Dictionary of the English Catholics* (c.1895-1902)  
*Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, ii, 59 and 322

John Fisher, preface to the University of Wales reprint of *Allwydd neu agoriad paradwys i'r Cymru hynny yw gweddiau, devotionau, cyngborion, ac athrawiaethau tra duwiol ac angentheidiol i bôb Christian yn mynnu agoryd y Porth a myned i mewn i'r Nef. Wedi eu cynnull o amryw lyfrau duwiol, a'i cyfeithu [sic] yn Gymraeg neu wedi eu cyfansoddi* (1670)

### Additional Links

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