

SION CAIN (c. 1575 - c. 1650), a herald bard

Name: Sion Cain
Date of birth: c. 1575
Date of death: c. 1650
Parent: Gwen wraig Rhys Cain
Parent: Rhys Cain
Gender: Male
Occupation: herald bard
Area of activity: History and Culture; Poetry
Author: Evan David Jones

son of [Rhys Cain](#), and born probably before the family settled at Oswestry about 1578. He succeeded his father in his profession, and he was regarded, in his day, as the last of the herald bards. He left some notes which suggest that he was also engaged in husbandry. He travelled widely in North Wales in the course of his occupation. The record of his public career begins with a visit to [Lleweni](#), with other bards, at Christmastide, 1607. Between that date and 1648, there survive over 300 of his genealogical poems, mostly holograph. None of his compositions can be dated later than 1648, and it may be concluded that he died about that time. His wife died 12 October 1646 (Pen. MS. 178 (79)), and in a petition to [colonel Mytton](#) against the billeting of soldiers in his house (1644?) he refers also to his family. His manuscripts became the property of [Robert Vaughan](#) of Hengwrt, who corresponded regularly with him. Nearly forty letters which were addressed to him on genealogical matters have survived (Pen. MS. 327), together with collections of his poems (Pen. MSS. 90, 116-7), a heraldic collection (Pen. MS. 149), and a genealogical collection (Pen. MS. 269). His poems are somewhat prosaic, and he could not vary much even in his opening lines. He was not equal to his father in craftsmanship. His armorial shields are much more untidy and his handwriting was much larger than that of his father.

Author

Evan David Jones, (1903 - 1987)

Sources

Reports on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language (Historical Manuscripts Commission 1898–1910)

N.L.W. *Peniarth Manuscripts at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth* as above, and pedigree charts in the Pen., Leeswood, Plas Nantglyn, and Llanbedrog collections

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