

TYDECHO, a 6th century Celtic saint

Name: Tydecho
Parent: Annwn Ddu ab Emyr Llydaw
Gender: Male
Occupation: Celtic saint
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Emrys George Bowen

said to have been the son of Annwn Ddu ab Emyr Llydaw. There is no known life of S. Tydecho but he is mentioned in the life of [S. Padarn](#) as one of the three leaders of bands of saints who came from Armorica to Wales. Some scholars doubt whether the Armorica referred to was in fact Brittany - as it is equally likely to be a district in south-eastern Wales, famous as a nursery of saints. In any case it is clear that the Litavian saints arrived in west Wales by sea, for their churches are in the main in the valleys of rivers flowing westward into Cardigan Bay. S. Tydecho's cult was centred in the Mawddwy area and thus is no exception to the usual rule. The persistence of his cult in this neighbourhood is remarkable, judged by the literary evidence alone. His legend is preserved by the 15th century bard [Dafydd Llwyd ap Llewelyn ap Gruffudd](#), who lived at Mathafarn, not far from where S. Tydecho is supposed to have settled. From his 'Cywydd Tydecho Saint' we learn that the saint lived the life of a hermit with his sister Tegfedd, and was frequently annoyed by that arch-enemy of the saints, [Maelgwn Gwynedd](#). In the following century [Mathew Brwmfield](#) wrote a *Cywydd* to Tydecho and the two parishes of Mawddwy with allusions to a famous miracle, said to have been performed by the saint locally. All that can now be said about Tydecho with any certainty is that the distribution of the churches that still bear his name conforms to the tradition that he, with many companions, arrived on the Merioneth coast by sea and then proceeded inland to settle in the Mawddwy region and the whole area that now forms the southern boundary land between the counties of Merioneth and Montgomery.

Author

Professor Emrys George Bowen, (1900 - 1983)

Sources

The Lives of the British Saints, iv, 283-5
Wade-Evans, *Welsh Christian Origins* (Oxford 1934), 1934, chap. x
E. G. Bowen, '[The Celtic Saints in Cardiganshire](#),' in *Ceredigion*, i, 1950

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Tydecho](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q4457150](#)

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