

# Madog ap Maredudd

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**Madog ap Maredudd** (Middle Welsh: *Madawg mab Maredudd*, *Madawc mab Maredudd*; died 1160) was the last Prince of the entire Kingdom of Powys, Wales and for a time held the Fitzalan Lordship of Oswestry.

Madog was the son of Maredudd ap Bleddyn and grandson of Bleddyn ap Cynfyn. He followed his father on the throne of Powys in 1132. He is recorded as taking part in the Battle of Lincoln in 1141 in support of the Earl of Chester, along with Owain Gwynedd's brother Cadwaladr ap Gruffydd and a large army of Welshmen. In 1149 he is recorded giving the commote of Cyfeiliog to his nephews Owain Cyfeiliog and Meurig. The same year Madog was able to rebuild Oswestry Castle, a fortress of William Fitzalan. It would seem likely that he had gained both the fortresses of Oswestry and Whittington in 1146.

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Approximate extent of Powys in 1160

## Defeat by Gwynedd

At this time the King of Gwynedd, between 1149 and 1150, Owain Gwynedd was exerting pressure on the borders of Powys, despite the fact that Madog was married to Susanna, Owain's sister. Madog made an alliance with Ranulf de Gernon, 4th Earl of Chester, but Owain defeated them at the Battle of Ewloe (Coleshill) in 1150 and took possession of Madog's lands in Iâl (English: Yale). In 1157 when King Henry II of England invaded Gwynedd he was supported by Madog, who was able to regain many of his Welsh lands. Even so, he retained the lordships of Oswestry and Whittington. In 1159 Madog would seem to have been the Welsh prince who accompanied King Henry II in his campaign to Toulouse which ended in failure. Returning home to Wales Madog died about 9 February 1160 in Whittington Castle. He was buried soon afterwards in the church of St Tysilio at Meifod, the mother church of Powys.

## Succession Shared

Madog's eldest son, Llywelyn, was killed soon after his father's death in 1160, Powys was then shared between Madog's sons Gruffydd Maelor, Owain Fychan and Owain Brogyntyn, his nephew Owain Cyfeiliog and half-brother Iorwerth Goch.<sup>[1]</sup> Powys was never subsequently reunited, being separated into two parts; Powys Fadog (Lower Powys) and Powys Wenwynwyn (Upper Powys). Madog's death enabled Owain Gwynedd to force the homage of Owain Brogyntyn, Madog's youngest son, and effectively annex part of northern Powys.

The poet Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr in his elegy on Madog said:

*While Madog lived there was no man  
Dared ravage his fair borders*

*Yet nought of all he held  
Esteemed he his save by God's might ...*

*If my noble lord were alive  
Gwynedd would not now be encamped in the heart of Edeyrnion*

Edeyrnion (or Edeirnion) was a commote inherited by Owain Brogyntyn and had been the home of his mother (who was not married to his father). Owain may also have been raised there. It was annexed to Gwynedd during Owain's time.

## The Mabinogion

The *Mabinogion* tale *The Dream of Rhonabwy* is set during Madog's reign. The central character, Rhonabwy, is one of Madog's retainers sent to bring in Madog's rebellious brother Iowerth Goch ap Maredudd. His titular dream contrasts his own time with the grandeur of King Arthur's period.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Children

- Llywelyn ap Madog, died 1160
- Gruffydd Maelor ap Madog, died 1191
- Owain Fychan ap Madog, c. 1125-1187
- Owain Brogyntyn ap Madog (illegitimate)
- Gwenllian ferch Madog, married Rhys ap Gruffydd, prince of Deheubarth
- Marared ferch Madog, married Iorwerth ab Owain Gwynedd and was the mother of Llywelyn the Great
- Efa ferch Madog, married Cadwallon ap Madog ap Idnerth, prince of Maelienydd

## Fiction

Madog's intervention in the Battle of Lincoln in 1141 forms an important plot element in the detective novel *Dead Man's Ransom*, part of the *Brother Cadfael* chronicles by Edith Pargeter (writing as Ellis Peters).

## Notes

1. Ashley, Mike (2012). *The Mammoth Book of British Kings and Queens*Hachette.
2. Gantz, Jeffrey (translator) (1987).*The Mabinogion*,pp. 177–191. New York: Penguin.ISBN 0-14-044322-3

## References

- John Edward Lloyd (1911). *A history of Wales: from the earliest times to the Edwardian conquest*. Longmans, Green & Co.
- Remfry, P.M., *Whittington Castle and the families of Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, Peverel, Maminot, Powys and Fitz Warin* (ISBN 1-899376-80-1)
- *Ancestral Roots of Certain American Colonists Who Came to America Before 1700* by Frederick Lewis Weis, Line 176B-26

Regnal titles		
Preceded by <b>Maredudd ap Bleddyn</b>	<b>Prince of Powys</b> 1132–1160	Succeeded by <b>Gruffydd Maelor</b> <b>Owain Fychan</b> <b>Owain Brogyntyn</b> <b>Owain Cyfeiliog</b> <b>Iorwerth Goch</b>

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