

## WYNNE, ELLIS (1670/1-1734), cleric, and author of an outstanding Welsh prose classic

**Name:** Ellis Wynne  
**Date of birth:** 1670/1  
**Date of death:** 1734  
**Spouse:** Lowry Wynne (née Lloyd)  
**Spouse:** Lowry Wynne  
**Child:** Edward Wynne  
**Child:** William Wynne  
**Child:** Edward Wynne  
**Parent:** Edward Wynne  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** cleric, and author of an outstanding Welsh prose classic  
**Area of activity:** Literature and Writing; Religion; Poetry  
**Author:** William Llewelyn Davies

Born 7 March 1670/1, at Y Lasynys, near Harlech and in the parish of Llandanwg, Merionethshire, son of Edward Wynne, who descended from a well-known Merioneth family (**Wynne of Glyn Cywarch**), and his wife, who had inherited Y Lasynys. It has not been ascertained, as yet, where Ellis Wynne received his early education nor how he spent his life until he entered Jesus College, Oxford, on 1 March 1691/2. It used to be thought that he left Oxford without graduating, but more recent evidence (**A. Ivor Pryce**, *The Diocese of Bangor during three centuries* and N.L.W. Vivian MS. 31) seems to point to graduation (B.A., afterwards M.A.). Degree or no degree, there is abundant evidence that the author of *Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsc* was a man of superior education and much culture. Local tradition suggests that he was a student of the law before his kinsman, **Humphrey Humphreys**, bishop of Bangor and, afterwards, of Hereford, persuaded him to take holy orders. He was ordained deacon on 24 December, and priest on 31 December 1704.

Ellis Wynne married (1), September 1698, Lowry Wynne of Moel-y-glo, a kinswoman and a neighbour (she died July 1699, at the birth of their first-born Edward, who died before he was 2 years old), and (2) Lowry Lloyd, Hafod Lwyfog, Beddgelert. Nine children were born of the second marriage; of these William, the second child, and Edward, the youngest, are noticed below.

On 1 January 1704/5, Ellis Wynne became the incumbent of the neighbouring parish of Llandanwg; he also had charge of the chapelry of Llanbedr. In November 1706 he wrote to lady Margaret Owen, widow of **Sir Robert Owen (of Brogyntyn, Salop)**, and associated also with **Glyn Cywarch, Meironnydd**, the letter beginning - ' My Parishioners of Llandanwg and my Self are extremely desirous of a Chappell again at Harlech ... ' (N.L.W. Brogyntyn manuscript reproduced, as is another letter by him, in a N.L.W. Brogyntyn manuscript, in *Dauganmlwyddiant Ellis Wynne, Llwllyfr y Dathliad*, 1934, and in *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, 1949). In 1711 he relinquished the cure of Llandanwg (with Llanbedr) and from July of that year until his death he was the incumbent of Llanfair-juxta-Harlech. (For further details about his life as priest and his life generally, including details of books and manuscripts which he owned, see the *Dauganmlwyddiant ... handbook*, already cited.)

Wynne is remembered, largely and indeed mainly, by virtue of his *Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsc* ('*The Visions of the Sleeping Bard*'), first printed (in London) in 1703, a Welsh prose classic, of which at least thirty-two editions had appeared up to 1932, and of which at least three translations into English were made; for details of editions and translations, see *Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, iv, 199-208). The author had previously published (London, 1701) a translation, under the title of *Rheol Buchedd Sanctaidd ...*, of Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living*, whilst, in 1710, appeared his edition of the *Welsh Book of Common Prayer*. In the latter appeared his best-known Welsh hymn, that beginning ' Myfi yw'r Adgyfodiad Mawr '; four other hymns by him, together with a version of a psalm, and two carolau plygain, all in Welsh, appeared after his death in a work, published by his son Edward in 1755, in *Prif Addysc y Cristion ...* He died 13 July 1734, and was buried under the altar at Llanfair-juxta-Harlech.

### WILLIAM WYNN (1704 - 1761), cleric

His second son by his second wife. Born 14 July (and christened 15 July) 1704. He was educated at Chester under Dr. Henschman, at Llanegryn, Meironnydd, under John Edwards, 1717-22, and at Jesus College, Oxford, 10 March 1722 to 3 July 1726 (B.A. and M.A.). He was ordained deacon at Bangor 6 August 1726, and priest 14 July 1728, was curate of Llanaber 13 August 1726 to September 1731, served at Mallwyd and in Anglesey, returning in 1733 to Merioneth as curate to his father at Llanfair-juxta-Harlech and, on 21 September 1734, succeeding him as incumbent. In April 1750 he became rector of Llanaber. William Wynn married (1), 28 January 1734, Jane, daughter of **William Wynne**, Maesyneuadd, near Harlech (she died 9 December 1734, in childbirth), and (2) Jane, daughter of Hugh Lloyd, Trallwyn, Caernarfonshire; by Jane he had an only child, Ellin. (For further details, see *Dauganmlwyddiant Ellis Wynne ...*). He died in July 1761.

### EDWARD WYNNE (1715 - 1767), cleric and author

Youngest son of Ellis Wynne by his second wife. He was christened on 25 March 1715. Reference is made above to the translation by him (*Prif Addysc y Cristion ...*), published in 1755 when he was curate at Llanaber to his brother William; he was later, 1759-67, incumbent of Penmorfa, Caernarfonshire. There are references to him in his father's will and in the various note-books, etc., of his brother William; for details see *Dauganmlwyddiant ...* and articles in *Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, 1934.

## Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

## Sources

There is a full bibliography in *Dauganmlwyddiant Ellis Wynne, Llwllyfr y Dathliad yn eglwysi Llanfair a Llandanwg, ac yng ngholeg Harlech, Gorffennaf 17, 1934* (Aberystwyth 1934)

see also article by John Lloyd in *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, 1949

## Works

Ellis Wynne, Daniel Silvan Evans, *Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsg* (Caerfyrddin 1878)

## Additional Links

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