

OWAIN GLYNDWR AND THE ABBOT OF VALLE CRUCIS

No name conjures up images of Welsh rebellion better than that of Owain Glyndwr. “I am not in the roll of common men,” says Owain in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, Part I*. More than just a revolutionary, Owain was born to Welsh aristocracy in 1354, descended of the royal bloodlines of Powys and Deheubarth in south west Wales. He inherited the title Baron of Glyndyfrdwy, and the manor of Glyndyfrdwy through his father. It was here on 16 September 1400 that he proclaimed himself Prince of Wales, beginning a fourteen-year long rebellion against English rule.

Like King Arthur, there is a tradition that Owain Glyndwr is still alive and sleeping, awaiting a time when he is needed again to lead Wales to freedom. A tale recorded by the chronicler Elis Gruffydd, tells of how the Abbot of Valle Crucis Abbey met Owain early one morning while walking alone on the hills above Llangollen. “You have risen early, Master Abbot,” said the Prince, to which the Abbot replied, “No, my Lord, it is you who have risen early – at least a hundred years too early.” With that, Owain walked away and disappeared into the morning mist.