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Rhys *ab* Owain

(*d.* 1078)

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Rhys *ab* Owain (*d.* 1078), ruler in Wales, was the son of Owain *ab* Edwin *ab* Einion *ab* Owain *ap* Hywel Dda. Rhys was one of the leaders defeated by William fitz Osbern (*d.* 1071) in an expedition led by the latter about 1070 against the people of Brycheiniog. On the death of Rhys's brother Maredudd in 1072, Bleddyn *ap* Cynfyn of north Wales appears to have seized the kingship of Deheubarth, but in 1075 Rhys and the nobles of Ystrad Tywi (east Carmarthenshire) slew the northern ruler, and south Wales was divided between Rhys and Rhydderch *ap* Caradog, who in the same year defeated Gronw and Llywelyn, sons of Cadwgan *ab* Elystan, in the battle of Camddwr. One chronicle erroneously states that Rhys was slain in this battle. In 1076 the death of Rhydderch left Rhys in sole possession; he defeated the sons of Cadwgan once again in the following year, in the battle of 'Gweunytwl'. In 1078 Rhys was attacked at Pwllgwdig by Trahaearn *ap* Caradog, then ruling over north Wales; Rhys's household troops were cut to pieces, and he himself became a fugitive, disasters which were regarded in the north as a judgement for the murder of Bleddyn. Towards the end of the same year he and his brother Hywel were slain by Caradog *ap* Gruffudd, lord of Gwynllŵg.

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