

ELLIS, THOMAS (1711/12 - 1792), cleric

Name: Thomas Ellis
Date of birth: 1711/12
Date of death: 1792
Parent: Edward Ellis
Gender: Male
Occupation: cleric
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born at Meliden, Flintshire, he was the son of Edward Ellis. He matriculated at Jesus College, Oxford, 5 February 1727/8, 'aged 16,' graduated in 1731, took his B.D. in 1741 (Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*), and was Fellow of Jesus 1731-61 (Hardy, *Jesus College*), and eventually Senior Fellow. In 1737 he was preferred to the college curacy (or 'lectureship') of Holyhead. He was a most diligent minister, of a rather strict and puritanical type, and a warm supporter of Griffith Jones's schools; there are many letters of his in *Welch Piety*, including a sharp condemnation of John Evans of Eglwys Cymyn (1702 - 1782); he seems to have acted as a sort of supervisor of the schools in Anglesey, and was one of the half-dozen Welsh clerics appointed by Griffith Jones to receive contributions towards the support of the movement. Ellis was particularly anxious to prevent the schools from being associated in the popular mind with Methodism, and still more with Dissent (see 'John Wesley in North Wales,' *Bathafarn*, ii, 50-1); he published, 1746 (revised edition, 1747 - see *Morris Letters*, i, 120, *et alibi*), *Byr Grynhoad o'r Grefydd Gristionogol*, a warning against schism, and when John Wesley was at Holyhead in March 1748 (Wesley's *Journal*, 26-7 March), Ellis pressed him to write something 'to advise the Methodists not to leave the Church' - Wesley 'sat down immediately' and wrote *A Word to a Methodist*, which Ellis translated and printed (Dublin, 1748) under the title *Gair i'r Methodist*. Ellis was also a promoter of the S.P.C.K. 1746 edition of the Welsh *Bible*, and seems to have suggested the appointment of Richard Morris to supervise it. He was indeed on the most cordial terms with the Morrises, more especially with his neighbour William Morris, and there are scores of references to him in their letters. A corresponding member of the Society of Cymmrodorion (he was proposed by William Morris), he was keenly interested in Welsh literature, and showed much kindness to Goronwy Owen. In July 1759 he was preferred to the 'prize' living of his college, Nutfield in Surrey. He could now afford to resign his Fellowship (his stipend at Holyhead had been only £50) and married (1762); he had two children. He died at Nutfield 23 February 1792, aged 80.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Lucy Williams in *Anglesey Antiquarian Society & Field Club Transactions*, 1947, 49-50

The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William, and John Morris, of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid MÃ´n) 1728-1765 (1907) - index by Hugh Owen, 1942

J. H. Davies (ed.), *The Letters of Goronwy Owen (1723-69)* (Cardiff 1924) index

D. Ambrose Jones, *Griffith Jones Llanddowror* (Wrecsam 1923), 1923, index

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Thomas Ellis \(priest, died 1792\)](#)

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