

HOLLAND, WILLIAM (1711 - 1761), early Methodist and Moravian

Name: William Holland
Date of birth: 1711
Date of death: 1761
Spouse: Elizabeth Holland (née Delamotte)
Parent: Nicholas Holland
Gender: Male
Occupation: early Methodist and Moravian
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born at Haverfordwest 16 January 1711, son of Nicholas Holland, of the Hollands of Walwyn's Castle - see [Holland families \(2\)](#); Nicholas Holland was great-great-grandson of [Robert Holland](#). According to Moravian tradition, William Holland was at Haverfordwest grammar school at the same time as [bishop John Gambold](#); he does not seem to have been Welsh -speaking. Before 1732 he was in London, and had a fairly large house-painting business in Basinghall Street. He took to religion, and frequented the society which met at first in James Hutton's house and afterwards in Alders-gate Street and Fetter Lane, before the split between John Wesley and the Moravians; it seems pretty certain that Hutton was the man who read out portions of Luther on Galatians, in Wesley's hearing (14 May 1738) - the event which Wesley regarded as the occasion of his own 'conversion.' But Hutton was drawn into Moravianism. On receiving (1741) the Brethren's assurance that he could be one of them without forsaking the Church of England, he sold his business and was set apart as a Moravian 'labourer.' When the official congregation (i.e. church) of the United Brethren was established in Fetter Lane (30 October 1742), Holland's name stood first in the list of its members; he was one of its two 'stewards,' and an 'elder.' In 1743, he was appointed 'correspondent for Wales'; in the same year he conducted a mission in Yorkshire; in 1745 he went to Germany. On his return, he was sent on a mission to South Wales, including Pembrokeshire; his journey took from November 1746 till February 1747. But even from 1745 he had been disturbed by what he considered an increasing tendency among the Brethren towards separate 'denominationalism,' being himself a staunch Anglican. In November 1747 he was deprived of his 'labourer's' commission, and resumed his house-painting; shortly afterwards, to the intense chagrin of the Brethren, he went over to John Wesley. He died in London 23 February 1761. His wife (1741) was Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Delamotte and thus aunt to the first wife of [David Mathias](#); the Fetter Lane Archives have an autobiography and letters of hers; they have also an interesting account by Holland of the state of religion in Wales between 1735 and 1747, and an incomplete journal of his travels in South Wales in 1746-7 - these documents were printed by Miss Elnith R. Griffiths in *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes y Methodistiaid Calfniaidd*, xvi and xvii.

Author

Emeritus Professor [Robert Thomas Jenkins](#), (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Moravian Records at Fetter Lane and at Haverfordwest

Elnith R. Griffiths (above)

The journal of the Rev. John Wesley, enlarged from original mss., with notes from unpublished diaries, annotations, maps, and illustrations (1938) in Curnock's edition and with his notes (indexed)

Benham, *Memoirs of James Hutton; comprising the annals of his life, and connection with the United Brethren* (London 1856)

Y Cymmrodor, xlv (indexed)

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