

## JONES, RICHARD ROBERT ('Dic Aberdaron'; 1779 - 1843), polyglot

**Name:** Richard Robert Jones  
**Pseudonym:** Dic Aberdaron  
**Date of birth:** 1779  
**Date of death:** 1843  
**Parent:** Margret Jones  
**Parent:** Robert Jones  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** polyglot  
**Area of activity:** Scholarship and Languages  
**Author:** Gruffydd Parry

A native of the parish of Aberdaron, possibly of the village itself. His father was a carpenter, who also built boats, but the son's apprenticeship to the craft was a failure. He became known for his exceptional knack of learning languages, ancient and modern, and also for his unkempt appearance and strange habits.

Because of his lack of interest in his father's craft he was obliged, either of his own free will or under compulsion, to leave home at an early age. As a result both of his own inclination and of the force of circumstances he was throughout his life a wanderer, and consequently our knowledge of his history is uncertain and scrappy. It is known that he had begun to learn Latin when he was about 12 years of age, and that he was learning Greek before he was 20. He visited Liverpool in 1804 and London in 1807, and stayed for short periods at Bangor, at Caernarvon, and in Anglesey. In the course of his wanderings he found opportunities to learn Hebrew, and also modern languages, such as Spanish and Italian.

The large number of books which he always carried about his person he had sometimes to sell in order to procure food and clothing, and buy back again. He took no interest in literature, and it is said that he could read whole books and yet gain hardly any knowledge of their contents. The compilation of his Welsh-Greek-Hebrew dictionary occupied him during the years 1831 and 1832, but he did not succeed in securing a sufficient number of subscribers for its publication. He died at S. Asaph 18 December 1843 and was buried there; his epitaph was composed by [Ellis Owen](#), Cefnymeysydd.

### Editorial note 2021:

In an autobiography which he began towards the end of his life Dic notes that his sister Jane told him that he was born in 1780, and that is the date on his gravestone. However, the records of St Hywyn's Church, Aberdaron, show that he was baptized on 4 July 1779. He was the third of four children of Robert Jones and his wife Margret. [Information from Alun Jones]

### Author

Gruffydd Parry, (2002)

### Sources

W. Stanley Roscoe, *Memoir of R. R. Jones, of Aberdaron, exhibiting a remarkable instance of a partial power and cultivation of intellect*(London 1822)

D. L. Thomas, *Jones, Richard Roberts (1780-1843)*, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

*Y Gwladgarwr*, iv.; 223; v. 29

*Bye-Gones, relating to Wales and the Border Counties*, 1899-90

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 697C: Dic Aberdaron](#)

### Further Reading

Thomas Edwards, Robert Ellis, *Hanes bywyd Richard Robert Jones, neu Dic Aberdaron: Cymro nodedig am ei dalent a'i archwaeth at ddysgu ieithoedd, yr hwn, yn wyneb pob anfantais, a weithiodd ei ffordd nes dyfod yn hyddysg mewn pedair ar ddeg o ieithoedd!* (Caernarfon 1870?)

ODNB: [Jones, Richard Roberts \[called Dick of Aberdaron\] \(1780-1843\)](#)

Wikipedia Article: [Dic Aberdaron](#)

## Images

Ellis Owen Ellis, *Life and times of Richard Robert Jones*, NLW Drawing vol. 51

NLW: Dick Aber Daron old Welsh poet

William Roos, Dic Aberdaron

## Additional Links

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